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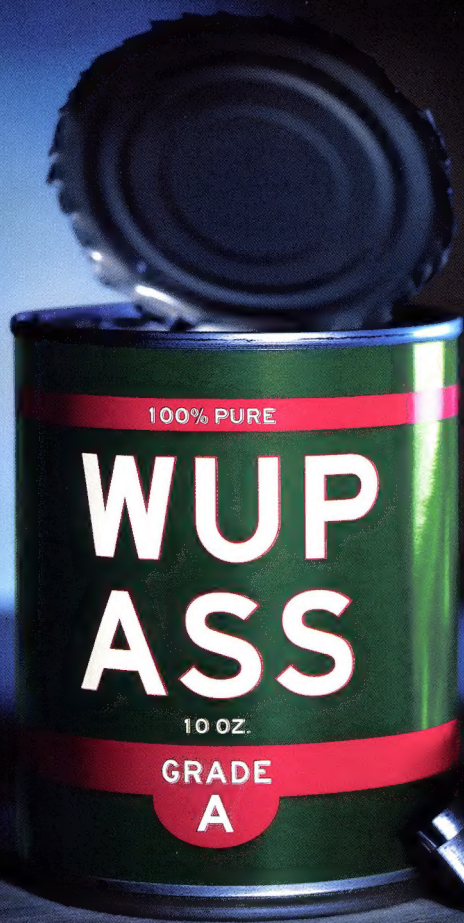


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SEPTEMBER 1998 • ISSUE #3

DEPARTMENTS

ARCHIVE099

Almost every PC and videogame release since the inception of 32 bit consoles - reviewed and updated every month! This is where to find the old games you want buy, rent or even swap with your friends. It may even inspire you to dust off some of that ancient software and give it another try.

HARDWARE064

We rate and slate the latest gaming hardware. Will these gizmos help or hinder your gaming experience? This month we take a look at some lightning-fast PCs, some cool controllers and the essential new 3D cards. Quake just isn't the same without them.

INCOMING.....058

Our vast news and previews section, with all the latest facts from the forefront of the gaming universe. Check out all the cool gaming news from our E3 trip and beyond, including the lowdown on Sega's dreamy Dreamcast and our interview with the man in charge, Bernie Stolar.

PADDED CELL094

Reader Reviews, Reader Art, and the rantings and ravings of our resident psycho. This month, we get a Reader Review all the way from Japan, and Bill decides to give all of our readers a hand... literally. And don't forget to check out this month's beautiful Reader Art.

REVIEWS012

The biggest, best and most comprehensive reviews ever seen in a games magazine. The heart of Game Buyer. The biggest game this month is Parasite Eve, but there are plenty of other titles to check out - including Elemental Gearbolt, Flying Dragon and X-Com Interceptor.

N64

Flying Dragon
International Superstar Soccer '98
Virtual Chess

SATURN

Shining Force III

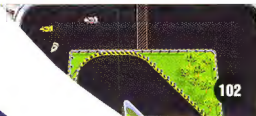
PLAYSTATION

Circuit Breakers
Elemental Gearbolt
Fox Sports Golf
ISS Pro '98
Karla
Mortal Kombat 4
NCAA Football
NFL Extreme
Parasite Eve
Pocket Fighter
Turbo Prop Racing

PC

Addiction Pinball
Cyberstorm 2
Game, Net & Match
Jazz Jackrabbit 2
Microsoft Baseball
Redjack: Revenge of the Brettnen
World Of Combat 2000
X-Com: Interceptor

What ever happened to Atari?



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Mortal Kombat 4



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Hardware



01



FEATURED

PARASITE EVE.....014

Horror, sex appeal and gameplay all tied up in a nice package, *Parasite Eve* is the game to watch. Read the biggest review and decide for yourself.



DREAMCAST.....058

Sega is back, and how! Dreamcast promises to be the greatest console ever made. We have the specs, the games and the people involved. Is this the future?



PIONEX PC.....064

Fast, cheap, powerful, sexy? It can't be a Ferrari because of the 'cheap' part. The Pionex games PC, however, is all of the above.



Parasite Eve



Shining Force III



NFL Extreme



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PRINTED IN THE USA

HELLO THERE...



The console wars are about to start again. Largely thanks to Dreamcast from Sega. You'll hear about Project X, but that's a weird, weird thing and it'll be hiding in the darkness of DVD players and set-top boxes. Nope, Sega's new machine is the one to watch. Incredibly powerful, it's a graphics monster - easily capable of outstripping the most powerful PC. Easily capable of replicating the graphic quality of Sega's Model 3 arcade machines. And Sega seems to have the right plan. Dreamcast has a Modern, it has analog control as standard. Dreamcast will probably have the right price - it looks like the US version will cost just under \$200. If Sega can pull it off, with the right games at launch, then Sony and Nintendo will be in for a bumpy ride to the new Millennium. I love saying that...The new Millennium'. PlayStation 2? Nintendo 2000? Bring 'em on. We're more than ready.

-Frank O'Connor

THE CHEATS ARE BACK!

You asked for 'em and now you've got 'em. Starting in the very next issue of Game Buyer, we'll be making a few fantastic additions. Not least of these will be a comprehensive, helpful and dynamic cheats section. Add to that full strategies for the biggest games ever month (WWF Warzone to get you started) and you have yet another great reason to read Game Buyer.

Next month we'll also have a couple of surprises you simply can't be without, so make sure to tune into the October issue of your favorite magazine. But that's next month...and there's so much stuff to read this month....

REVIEWS

The very heart of Game Buyer.

Game Buyer's review system is designed to be the most accurate, informative and entertaining - to provide you with a powerful resource, a totally accurate buyer's guide. No more guesswork, no more reliance on the biased opinion of one reviewer, but rather, a scientific, well considered and evenly opinioned masterpiece. We don't even stop at simple game reviews. Where appropriate, we'll talk about prequels, development teams, even cheats to get you started. This is just the beginning.

You'll also notice that the balance between N64, PlayStation, PC, and Saturn will shift from month to month - and there's a very simple reason. We intend to review every game, regardless of format. This month, we bring you *Burning Rangers* and, when Sega releases Dreamcast, we'll be reviewing games on that system too, so fear not, gentle Sega fans, we'll be taking good care of you.

You'll also notice, scattered among our news and previews, the occasional hand held review, including Game.Com and Game Boy systems. When color Game Boy arrives later this year, you can expect to see more of those, and possibly bigger reviews. And we still want more input. Let us know what you want to see in reviews that you don't see now. We'll consider any good ideas and you'll see a lot of evolution over the coming months. Without any further ado, let's get on with it!



A Game Buyer review is like a big map showing you where the good games are. Or perhaps it's like a tapestry, telling the legend of a good game. No, wait a minute, it's like an ancient scroll, revealing the mystery of a good game. Aack, whatever, it's the biggest, most comprehensive review you can read.

Info box

Check at a glance who made this game, for which machine, when it's available and all that good stuff. Game Buyer's all about information.

P.I.G.

Or Predicted Interest Graph, if you prefer. We consider many factors for this: The ease of play, longevity of game, the result is a year-long graph indicating the life span of a game.

Stamp

This is the money shot. Should you buy it or not? All our review information concentrated into one simple device. The Game Buyer stamp.

Equalizer

See at a glance how your game performs in the most important areas: gameplay, graphics, sound, depth and control. Graphically illustrated for ease of use.

Game System

it's pretty darned important to know which machine the review is based on - so we made it simple to see at a glance which format the game is running on.

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PARASITE EVE



Squaresoft's big time

Cinematic RPG finally makes its way to the States, but does it have any substance to back up its style?

After the success of blockbuster, innovative games like **Final Fantasy VII** and **Bushido Blade**, Squaresoft decided to try out something they'd never done before: a role-playing action adventure. After calling on some big Hollywood talent and molding the storyline around the literary backbone

of one of Japan's most popular award-winning horror/sci-fi novels,

Parasite Eve was finally born. If done well, the game could marry the concepts of two of the most successful titles on the PlayStation, **Final Fantasy VII** and **Resident Evil**. In theory, the combination of a deep, complex plot, an attractive heroine, sky high production costs and action-packed gameplay seems to be all that a game needs in order to succeed, but does it qualify as a must-have title? With a lot of high expectations from fans and the industry, is the game up to snuff with the rest of Square's high end videogame heritage? Well, maybe.

Aya Brea, a young NYPD detective (and the new postergirl to legions of drooling Squaresoft fanboys), remains the lone survivor in a rash of unfathomable attacks on the innocent people of Manhattan by a young opera starlet by the name of Eve. It appears that Eve has the terrible power to destroy people at the molecular level without even laying a finger on them, and this is where the real mystery begins.

Why is Aya the only one able to withstand the attacks and who, or what, is Eve? You'll spend the entire game scrambling around the Big Apple tracking down Eve, deciphering Aya's fuzzy past (as told through hilariously cliché flashbacks, complete with dramatic light flashes and fade out), and fighting some of the most gruesome creatures this side of Raccoon City.

The story behind **Parasite Eve** is well known to Japanese gamers since the novel it was based on sold like crazy there



The city of New York is represented beautifully in this game. Here's Aya standing on the street in a slit dress. Now what does that mean?

SYSTEM: PlayStation

PRICE: \$49.99

GENRE: Action/RPG

PLAYERS: 1

ESRB RATING: T (Teen)

RECOMMENDED: Analog controller

PUBLISHER: Square/EA/LLC

DEVELOPER: Squaresoft

WEB: www.squaresoft.com

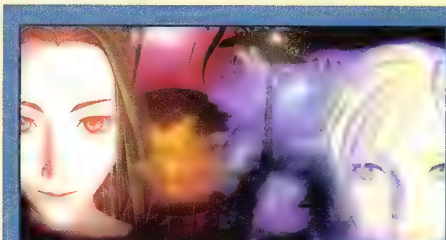
and spawned a full motion picture just last year. But for the game, Squaresoft decided to tweak the details and placed the core concept of wildly evolving mitochondria and the widespread effects of a diseased villain into an all-American setting. And while the game does manage to build a substantial amount of suspense, the tension and drama necessary to keep the gamer involved seems amiss from the

text. Instead, the dialogue between characters reads like a stiff highschool play instead of an involving series of interactions

continued on page 16



The cinemas in **Parasite Eve** give cause to owning a CD-based system over anything else and definitely top any other game on the system.

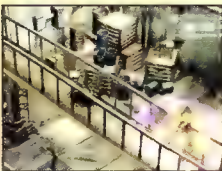


ALL-ORION AND NO GO?

With the developer's almost single-minded focus on how good the game looks, some gamers will wonder if they should have spent more time thinking about gameplay!



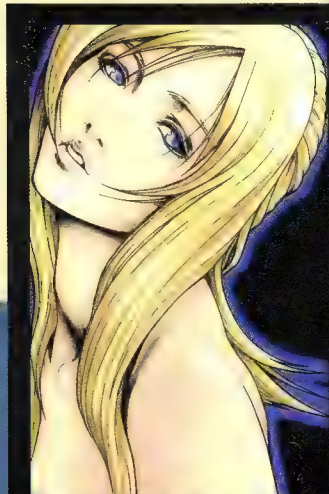
△ The menu system may be a little confusing at first, but only requires a little time to get it figured out.



△ Aya possesses special powers which come in handy during most of the game's fights.



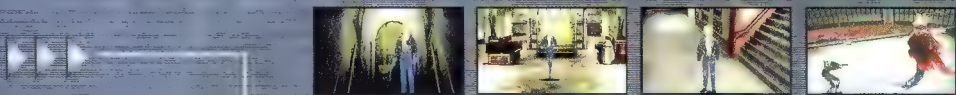
△ Who needs to worry about appropriate fashion sense and bad hair days when you've got an entire species waiting to go extinct?



After a hard day of saving New York City's butt, Aya hopes for a modeling career with Bob Guccione or maybe even Larry Flint. Looks like she's got all the qualifications she needs!



Not wanting to be confused for just another glamorous, brain dead New York model, Aya likes to show off her intellectual side. Here, our heroine tries to decide if she should breathe in, or out, first. It's all in the day of a hot New York heroine!



continued from page 14

building to the game's climax. This is one title that would've definitely benefited from the use of recorded speech during dialogue. This aberration scars the suspense and slows the plot development, but not as greatly as the lack of a good soundtrack.

Music goes hand in hand with dialogue in setting mood within a game and *Parasite Eve* stumbles in this regard. Attempting to capitalize on the use of silence and environmental sound effects, the timing seems strangely off in *Parasite Eve*. Segments that badly need ambient music to set an appropriate mood are mysteriously silent, while during other moments, the

same mellow track that filters throughout much of the game rattles on incessantly. If *Parasite Eve* was truly attempting to match its closest kin, *Resident Evil* and *Final Fantasy VII*, it certainly needs personality and atmosphere. But without solid dialogue and a sharp soundtrack, a good chunk of the immersion is lost.

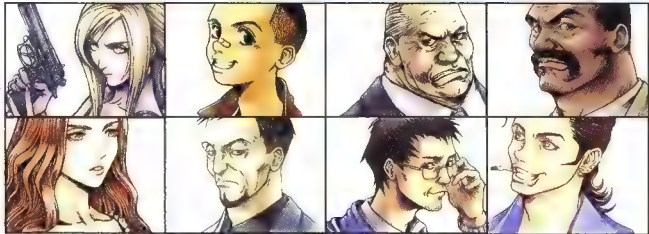
For gamers looking for a long, involving challenge, *Parasite Eve* may not provide you with the depth or longevity of other RPGs. Clocking in at around 15 or so hours for the most thorough player (it took us a little under 10 hours), the game relies more on its cinematic thrills to tide fans over. In other words,

don't expect to be couch bound for weeks, but expect a few days of gaming, instead. This may come as a slight disappointment for some hardcore role-players, but a nice little bonus from Square is the 'EX' mode that is unlocked after the game is completed which features some new areas, different items, and an upgraded difficulty level.

Fortunately, the game does score high points in innovation due to its somewhat unique combat engine, beautiful CG segments and

CAST OF CHARACTERS

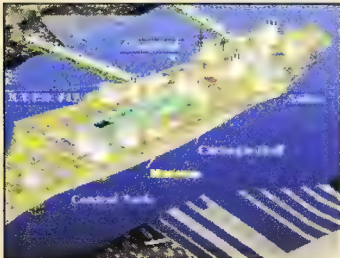
While not involving as many characters as in a traditional RPG, *Parasite Eve* does have its share of interesting folk. While most of the people populating the game are close allies of Aya, some may prove to be key figures in her past and are vital to unraveling all of the secrets in the story.



▲ You'll be fighting some of the most bizarre, not to mention the biggest, enemies in videogaming.

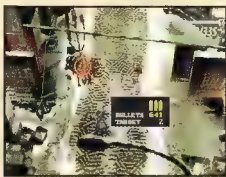


▲ The game's storyline spans only six days, so don't expect it to be the longest lasting joyride.



▲ The city of New York is yours to discover, as you survey after Eve from one landmark to another.

▲ The highlighted dome-shaped area during a battle shows the aiming range of your current weapon.

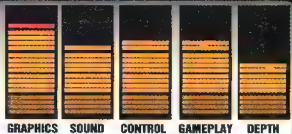


a very versatile weapon system. Encountering enemies takes place on the same screen that you're traveling on, which is a key element to the way combat takes place. Incorporating the Squaresoft trademark time gauge system, like in its last few *Final Fantasy* titles, battles are somewhat tumbased in that Aya can only attack when her gauge is full. Depending on the enemy you are dealing with, that gauge can move slower or faster, allowing you time to run around

the entire length of the combat area to avoid enemy attacks or to position yourself for a better shot. The combat most closely resembles the kind found in THQ's *N64* RPG, *Quest 64*, and adds a slightly more interactive approach to the traditional turnbased battle engine in most role playing games. But even with this feature, there are some limitations, such as the fact that some attacks are unavoidable due to the space constraints of some battle areas and the slowness of

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Aya believes in saving the earth, so she takes mass transit every chance she gets. Here she is waiting for the uptown bus with two of her friends.



Aya's pace. Evasion is simply not an option in a lot of encounters, making combat sometimes frustrating and necessitates the use of a good amount of items in conjunction with Aya's own 'Parasite Powers' (replacing the typical magic inventory) to heal when necessary.

This is just one of the several menu screens you'll encounter in Parasite Eve.



The interchangeable weapons system in *Parasite Eve* is also an interesting take on the usual method of upgrading equipment for your character. When you receive a weapon, with the proper item you can add on an extra 'slot' onto the

If done well, the game could marry the concepts of two of the PlayStation's most successful games.

piece by having the firearm or armor modified. Once this is done, you can then 'add on' another weapon or piece of armor onto the existing piece of equipment in order to upgrade it. This can result in high defense or evasion chances, or a better attack rate, range or bullet count in your firearm. So,

not only do you receive better weapons and armor throughout the game, you can also use it to increase the power or defense of your existing firearm or armor. It takes a little while to get used to the methods of doing it, but it works fairly well and provides some flexibility in upgrading your arsenal.

But the most talked about aspects of *Parasite Eve* from its inception to its release are the game's cinemas. The CG cinemas represent the real basis of *Parasite Eve*. Billed as 'The Cinematic RPG,' they are the very reason that Square recruited Hollywood talent, and the high production values shine through.



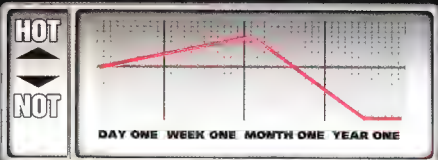
The game's cinemas are truly things of beauty!

Glossy special effects, glamorous action sequences and beautifully designed characters all show off the major technological advancements made on the PlayStation, but no matter how pretty they are or how nice they look, cinemas simply cannot replace the true heart and soul of any game.

While Square makes a valiant attempt at merging two popular genres together, the main problem with *Parasite Eve* is the game's inability to stand up as either an action game or an RPG. As an action game, the pace is painfully slow and the battles a little too stilted; while as an RPG, *Parasite Eve* doesn't possess enough personality or develop a deep enough involvement with the individual characters to merit an immersive experience. Though definitely one of the most stylish and visually impressive games to date mottled with some clever innovations, *Parasite Eve* might not carry enough substance to warrant a purchase by the merely curious.



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH



THINK ABOUT IT!



REVIEW ▶

POCKET FIGHTERS

Capcom squeezes another Street Fighter game from a seemingly bottomless reservoir. Will it be the last? Not a chance.



SUPER DEFORMATION

If you're wondering why these characters are all crazy-looking, then wonder no more. The process is called Super Deforming, and is the cartoonization of otherwise realistic characters. It started decades ago, but our limited research can't put an accurate date or artist on the origin.

Good examples of this are Dragon Half, or even Pokemon. The squat, dwarfed nature of the characters symbolizes youth above all else. These are supposed to be children - even when they have beards.

This also makes violent or adult-oriented material more appropriate for younger audiences. The stories change and the material becomes younger. So it's all good, baby.

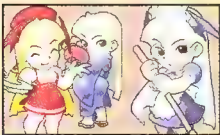
▶ Pocket Fighter will no doubt be lauded as a masterpiece of animation, but let's get one thing clear: The animation isn't very smooth. Sure, the art is fantastic, the characters superb, but the actual animation is jerky, spasmodic and typical of sprite based fighters on the PlayStation.

Pocket Fighter is however, a triumph of style over content. The action is frenetic, often confusing, and utterly insane. Tiny, Super Deformed versions of your favorite Street Fighter and Darkstalkers characters leap around the screen, morphing into cartoon alter-egos as they perform huge combos, special attacks and zany defenses.

The gameplay has bottomless appeal. The controls are tight and responsive, and perfectly logical, as they should be.



▶ This game resembles Street Fighter in more ways than one. Here, they've switched the runway background for a cookie shop...



▶ Tiny little women with big heads cook, clean and show you their hindquarters in Pocket Fighters. Pretty scary, huh, gang?

Add to this a comprehensive options list - and you have a game of surprising depth. You can take on a quest mode, play two player battles, or choose a 'Running Battle'. It's hard to say how this will sell, but we loved it. It's charming and wacky, in the best way.

SYSTEM: PlayStation

PRICE: \$49.99

GENRE: Fighting

PLAYERS: 1 or 2

ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)

RECOMMENDED: Valium

PUBLISHER: Capcom

DEVELOPER: Capcom

WEB: www.capcom.com



▶ A kick to the head results in all kinds of sparkly flashes. Gee, that's just like Street Fighter...

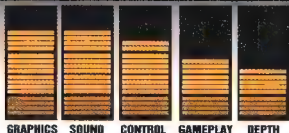
▶ A tiny, big-headed woman tries to get the tiny, big-headed guy's foot into the box. Why? Beats us...

BUY IT!



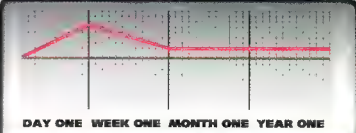
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PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

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NOT



Electronics Boutique

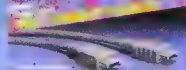
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ELECTRONICS BOUTIQUE

MORTAL KOMBAT 4



The gore and fatalities of *Mortal Kombat* are back again. So why are we reminded of summer reruns?

HEAD TO HEAD

MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES:
SUB ZERO
PUBLISHER: Midway
SYSTEM: PlayStation

Mythologies was Midway's relatively unsuccessful attempt to bring the MK license into other genres. The title was critically panned due to sloppy control, average play mechanics, and worse acting than that featured in *Godzilla*.

Truth be told, however, fans kind of dug it because it shed some light on Sub-Zero's past. What many people don't know however, is that since it came out at the same time as the arcade MK4, many of the characters, such as Fujin, the God of Wind, cross over into both games. Many of the levels in MKM:S2 are also used as MK4 fighting arenas.

Mythologies still didn't score very well with us, due mostly to the outdated (and even by *Mortal Kombat* standards) stiff gameplay.

MK MYTHOLOGIES
★★★



▶ Unlike Nintendo 64 owners that are starved for just about any competent fighting game they can get, PlayStation gamers have had a choice year for fighters, including such winners as *Bloody Roar*, *Dead Or Alive* and *Tekken 3*. How does *Mortal Kombat 4* stack up against the competition? Despite being an excellent conversion, not as well as you might hope.

The big change for MK4 is immediately noticeable by just glancing at the screenshots. That's right, the series has finally shed off its 2D sprite-based looks for a full 3D engine. The engine is actually quite nice and does a good of bringing the look and

The formula for MK4 is the same as the previous *Mortal Kombat* games, but does it stack up against other fighting games?

feel of the arcade machine to the home. The characters are nicely modeled, but the backgrounds are kept fairly simple, although they are in full 3D - unlike most



▶ Quan Chi uses his Mace to slam Riko into the screen. While this is a cool effect, pulling it off in a fight is tough because the swing is so slow.

▶ Here's Goro doing what he does best - his cheap stomping move!

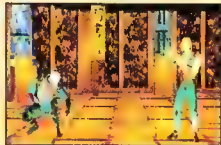
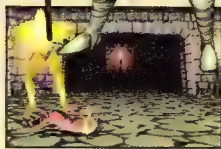
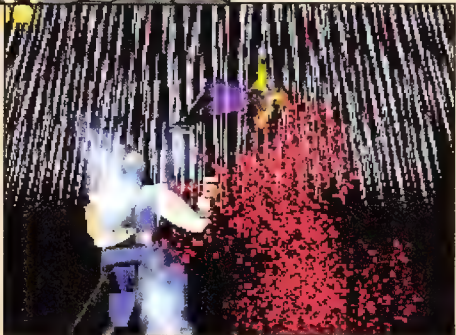
PlayStation fighters - which contain flat backgrounds. This means that combat takes place in 3D and you can actually back characters into walls of the arena on any side. Unfortunately, this is really not much of an effect

because 3D doesn't really affect the way combat flows in the game.

In fact, the fighting engine remains largely unchanged from previous *Kombat* games. You still have the same four attack buttons and a run button. The big secret is to figure out how to 'kombo' your opponent using juggle moves, pre set auto-com-

▶ This snow stage didn't make it into the arcade version.

▶ Once again, the Evil Cocktail Toothpicks of Death claim another victim! Olives, anyone?



▶ One complaint is that many of the older characters don't have any original fatalities. Here Sub Zero does his freezing fatality from MK2.

bos, and special moves. Since all of the characters contain the same basic moves and same auto combos, variety is found in inserting each character's special moves in the correct places to do maximum damage. The new additions to the gameplay include sidestepping and weapons. Sidestepping is actually a bit more useful in the home version because of the ability to map sidesteps to the wing buttons instead of double tapping and hit-

SYSTEM: PlayStation
PRICE: \$49.99
GENRE: Fighting
PLAYERS: 1 or 2
ESRB RATING: M (Mature)
RECOMMENDED: FAQ
PUBLISHER: Midway
DEVELOPER: Eurocom
WEB: www.midway.com



HOW TO 3D KOMBAT!

Despite its flashy 3D graphics, many players will instantly find out that this play machine is no more changed very much from previous MK games. Even many of the fatalities, although some with different animations, are just recaps of fatalities from older games.



▲ All of the special lighting and particle effects have survived the translation to the PlayStation port.



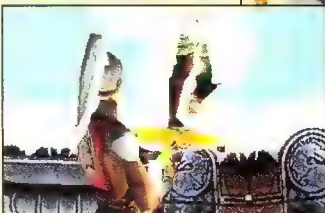
▲ Many items in certain arenas can be picked up and thrown at opponents. You can also do this with dropped weapons.



ting run. No matter how good you get at sidestepping, however, you will never be as good as the computer, which can sidestep any projectile at will and then run in and combo you into oblivion. Weapons are also a rather mediocre addition to the game because even though they look cool and do lots of damage, they are incredibly slow. Even the computer has trouble effectively using a weapon, which is saying something when you realize how cheap the AI is.

The difficulty is no surprise to fans of the series, however, as the AI in every MK game has been the same. Basically, the first three opponents are fairly easy and then, all of a sudden, the computer get really good. This is understandable in the arcade because, well, they want you to spend more money, but in a home version it's fairly annoying. The home version adds Goro to the mix and he's pretty hard, even on the easy level.

Of course, what really matters to any MK fan are the fatalities and you won't be disappointed. Each character has two unique fatalities and two shared stage fatalities. The fatalities are very reminiscent of the series



▲ Liu Kang speaks to his love, Kitana, with about as much emotion as a dead stick in this end game sequence.

before it got so silly, they are all dark and suitably bloody.

MK4 plays better than its arcade counterpart, due to much better controller response. Unfortunately, the formula has gotten old after so many installments. It's interesting to note that, unlike almost every other series of fighting games, the old characters

have never been improved and play as they always have. That's what sells *Mortal Kombat*, though. Fans know exactly what to expect and they can play it immediately. The tired concept and gameplay don't hold up nearly as well as the newest crop of PlayStation fighters. It's time for something new - and no, we

don't want *Ultimate MK 4 Super Tournament Edition*.



FINISH HIM!

▶ Fans should remember Sub-Zero's bloody head rip fatality from the first installment of the series. It's cooler in 3D.

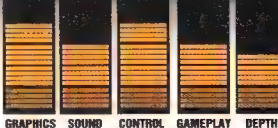
One complaint is that many of the older characters don't have any original fatalities. Here Sub-Zero does his freezing fatality from MK2.

We figure MK will be around as long as gamers want to see the many faces of death.



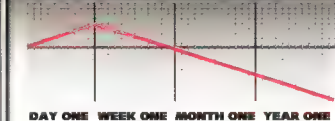
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KARTIA

▶ Kartia proves to be involving, thoroughly entertaining and a formidable challenge. The game plays much like Atlus' last title, *Tactics Ogre*, but battle strategies have been pared down so that the player must rely more

heavily on the use of 'Phantoms' in large scale combat, rather

than specific tactics and characters. This world revolves around the use of cards, called Kartia, which provide the population with the necessary resources, magic and items needed for survival. They are also used to create Phantoms that can be used as laborers or soldiers.

Battle can be long and repetitious, but with a very clever magic system that includes the ability to create Phantoms and Weapons, there is a high degree of flexibility and involvement. The Kartia system also proves to be an incredibly innovative fea-

However, I was surprised to find out that the Northern Rebels were actually the Good Guys. What are the Northern Knights doing? I don't like the fact that

to simply creating



▶ You'll get to know each character's personality through a series of introspective 'sketches' at the end of each scenario.

SYSTEM: PlayStation

PRICE: \$49.99

GENRE: RPG

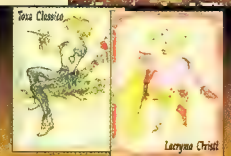
PLAYERS: 1 or 2

ESRB RATING: T (Teen)

PUBLISHER: Atlus

DEVELOPER: Atlus

WEB: www.atlus.com

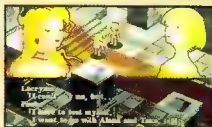


Which story will you read?

▶ Consistent with the wacky, 'too-many-consonants-or-vowels' name rule for strategy RPGs, Kartia includes its share of tongue twisting character names.

ture for an RPG. With a Vs. mode (challenge a friend's army), an item swap option (via memory card) and solid gameplay, Kartia is a must have.

▶ Weapon and Phantom creation is one of the coolest things about the battle sequences in Kartia, beyond its multiplayer capabilities.



▶ Each chapter consists of long talks, a huge battle and the chance to gain extra items at the Arena.

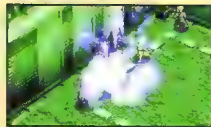


BUY IT!



UNDERGROUND STAR?

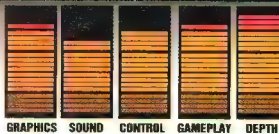
The success of Square's strategy/RPG Final Fantasy Tactics introduced a new host of players to a different type of role playing game that didn't rely so heavily on exploration and linear story structures as it did on statistical combat and battle tactics. What a lot of the newer fans of the genre didn't realize is that a smaller company, Atlus, has been silently plugging away for years on these types of games with a modest amount of underground success. Now, with the release of Kartia, it may be able to step more steadily into the spotlight. RPGs are so story dependant, that graphics almost become a secondary concern, so it's good for the genre to have as many little boutique companies as possible. This way there's a breeding ground for creativity and originality.



▶ Battles and spells look similar to those in FF Tactics, but go further in character detail and depth.

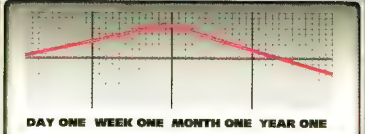
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REVIEW ▶



FOX SPORTS Golf '99



▶ Most golf games currently available for console systems seem archaic, which isn't to say they can't be fun, as **Hot Shots Golf** will attest to.

When it comes to looks, FSG '99's picture quality is definitely on the low res

side, with an overall graininess that won't win FSG '99 any

Technically imperfect, but sort of entertaining. **Fox Sports Golf '99** is the more successful of Fox Sports' two launch titles.

HEAD TO HEAD

HOT SHOTS GOLF
PUBLISHER: Sony
SYSTEM: PlayStation

Instead of trying to recreate an actual golf game and environment, **Hot Shots Golf** goes the old school videogame route and the result is a golf game that may look cartoony, but boasts impeccable gameplay. The fact that there's actually one miniature golf course included in the game is a nice plus. No other golf game on the PlayStation offers the simple fun of **Hot Shots Golf**.

HOT SHOTS GOLF
★★★★



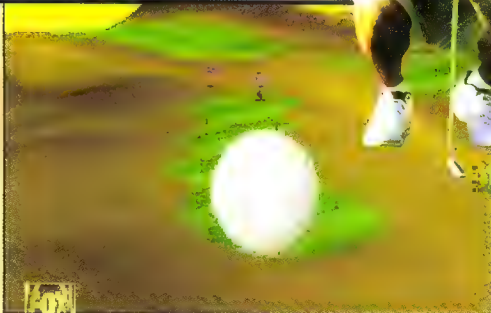
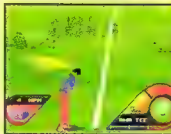
awards for graphics. Still, the low quality visuals don't interfere with gameplay to any great extent. The only real problem encountered was determining the slope of the greens, since the terrain grid was difficult to see at times.

There is a nice variety to the gameplay, as gamers can select **Stroke Play**, **Match Play**, **Skins Games**, **Foursomes**, and **Fourball** modes. One area of complaint is the slight lag experienced when inputting commands via the controller. Players will eventually get used to the lag and compensate, but it does take some time.

Fox Sports Golf '99 is certainly solid and offers satisfactory depth and replay value. The

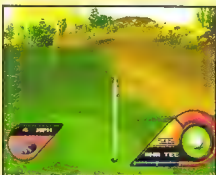
▶ The ability to quickly cycle through different camera angles to survey a hole and determine where a shot will land is one of the game's best features.

▶ FSG '99 is a credible golfing game that offers everything a gamer expects, but doesn't offer anything truly innovative or revolutionary.



only thing that really holds it back is the low quality graphic work, which makes putting just difficult enough to ruin all the fun. Golf fans should think about this one.

THINK ABOUT IT!



▶ The presentation in the game is well done with television style camera views and accurate commentary.

SYSTEM: PlayStation

PRICE: \$44.99

GENRE: Sports

PLAYERS: 1 to 4

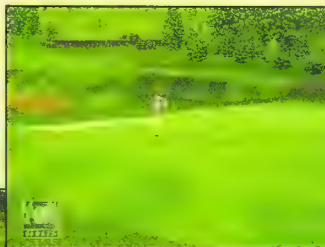
ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)

RECOMMENDED: Ugly clothes

PUBLISHER: Fox Sports Int.

DEVELOPER: Gremlin Int.

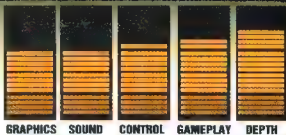
WEB: www.foxinteractive.com



▶ The grainy graphics in FSG '99 don't really adversely effect gameplay, but it does make it more difficult to judge the terrain while putting.

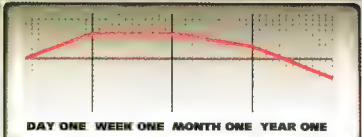
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REVIEW ▶

NCAA FOOTBALL '99

EA Sports continues its trek

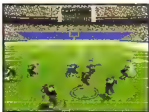
down the comeback trail and finally offers some serious competition to Sony's PlayStation football dynasty.

HEAD TO HEAD

NCAA GAMEBREAKERS '98
PUBLISHER: Sony Int. Studios
SYSTEM: PlayStation

As good as a game as NFL Gameday '98 was, NCAA Gamebreakers '98 makes the convincing argument that it is the better game. Like Gameday, the Total Control Passing system is Gamebreaker's competitive advantage. No other football game allows the player the level of control that Gamebreakers does. Couple that with the extensive playbook and superb game graphics and Sony's game gives the gamer everything they could want in a college football game.

NCAA GAMEBREAKERS '98
★★★★



▶ Boasting a new high resolution 3D polygon engine, NCAA Football looks every bit the match visually to Sony's NCAA Gamebreaker. It's close, but the edge in actual player models might go to EA Sports for the moment. When it comes to features, NCAA Football '99 is particularly well laden.

The Play Editor, which allows players to create plays and incorporate them into custom playbooks, will have football fanatics tinkering for months, and Dynasty mode allows for the ultimate in replay value as players can build a school's program up based on on-field performance and recruiting over several seasons.

▶ Refinement of basic gameplay elements and the inclusion of a number of new features finally make NCAA Football a legitimate contender in its category.



▶ The players in the game not only look better than last year, but boast a number of new moves including wrap tackles, juks, and fake punts and pitches.

But ultimately gameplay is what makes a great football game. And though the edge still goes to Sony's NCAA Gamebreakers, it is somewhat of an apples and oranges situation. The level of complexity and depth exhibited by NCAA Gamebreakers makes it the defi-

▶ NCAA Football '99 does a great job recreating the atmosphere of a college football game with fight songs, chants, situational crowd noises, drunken students...



▶ The Play Editor, which allows the player to create plays and add them to his playbook, is one of the best features in the game.

nite choice for hardcore gamers, but for the novice or casual gamer the more accessible gameplay of NCAA Football '99 makes it easier to enjoy the game.

One thing is for sure, this slug fest between Sony and EA for football dominance insures one winner - the gamer. And that's a nice change.

SYSTEM: PlayStation

PRICE: \$49.99

GENRE: Sports

PLAYERS: 1 or 2

ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)

RECOMMENDED: Memory card

PUBLISHER: EA Sports

DEVELOPER: Tiburon

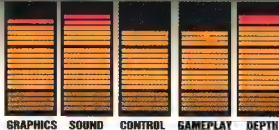
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PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
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REVIEW ▶

International Superstar SOCCER PRO '98



▶ This year, Konami has created a PlayStation version of ISS and though it falls short of its N64 brethren, it easily assumes the title of best PlayStation soccer game.

When it comes to graphics, the nod has to go to the N64 version of ISS, but ISS Pro '98 looks superb. More importantly, the players in the game move and react realistically. Gameplay is a tad slower than the N64 game, but everything moves so fluidly that there is

The N64 soccer powerhouse from Konami makes its debut on the PlayStation and asserts its dominance once again.

little room for complaint.

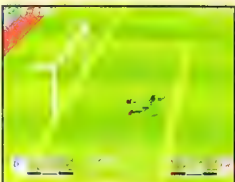
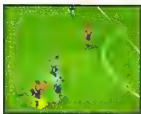
The gameplay is pretty much on par with the N64 version of the game. The computer AI is so well developed that a challenging one player game can be had even on a

HEAD TO HEAD

WORLD CUP '98
PUBLISHER: EA Sports
SYSTEM: PlayStation

As recently as a month ago, World Cup '98 was the soccer game to have on the PlayStation. An argument can still be made that the graphics in World Cup '98 are a shade better, but when it comes to the all important areas of gameplay, strategy options, and computer AI, ISS Pro '98 outshines EA Sports best effort.

WORLD CUP '98
★★★★



▶ Goalie AI is always key to a great soccer game and ISS Pro '98 comes through with goalkeepers that are supremely realistic - good or bad.

SYSTEM: PlayStation
PRICE: \$49.95
GENRE: Sports
PLAYERS: 1 or 2
ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)
RECOMMENDED: Memory card
PUBLISHER: Konami
DEVELOPER: Konami
WEB: www.konami.com



▶ ISS Pro '98 boasts five stadiums and over 40 teams. Too bad the lack of licenses prevents the inclusion of real life teams and players.

moderate difficulty level.

Among the short list of complaints for ISS Pro '98 is the lack of licenses that would allow for real life players and teams to be incorporated in the game. Also, goals do seem to come a bit too easily when taking corner kicks or penalty kicks from just beyond the goal's box.

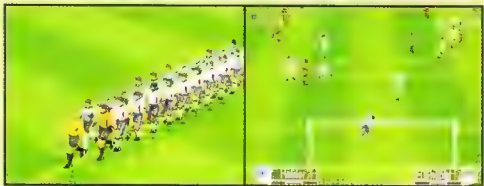
Of course, we are nitpicking. Those looking for the ultimate soccer experience on the PlayStation need look no further



▶ ISS Pro '98 is one of the rare occasions that a PlayStation game loses out in presentation - the goal celebrations in the N64 game are much more intimate and entertaining.



▶ If we had our druthers, we'd opt for the N64 version, but ISS Pro '98 is still the premiere PlayStation soccer game.



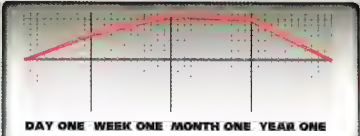
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"...F-22 Lightning II has hit the sim nail right on the head...fun to play from the get-go."

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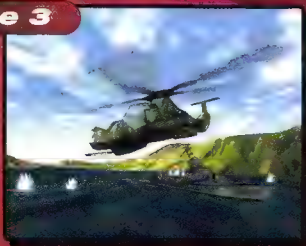


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REVIEW ▶

ELEMENTAL Gearbolt

▶ The light gun shooter genre hasn't been done much justice throughout the PlayStation's history, but with Working Designs entering the fray with the excellent

Elemental Gearbolt, genre fans needn't worry.

While not exactly on the extreme end of the innovation scale for a light gun game, **Elemental**

Gearbolt does excel in almost every other category. Best played with the Namco Guncon, gameplay is fast, furious and dramatic. The

futuristic mechs and the ornate fairies that litter each level create a very distinct RPGish feel, which is almost undeniably why the game probably attracted Working Designs in the first place.

Beyond the tight, action packed levels, **EG** also features an interesting system for high scores and weapon upgrades. At the end of a scenario, you have a choice

as to how you'd like to distribute your acquired points. You can either use them towards a high score or in order to increase the effectiveness of your firepower.

As Working Designs' first outing into the brave new world of light gun gaming, **Elemental**

Gearbolt is an excellent choice that should please fans and newcomers alike.



Working Designs gives a fantasy light gun game its trademark treatment and shows it has some versatility under its role-playing veil.

HISTORY

1991
Parasol Stars / Turbo
Grafx-16
Cadash / Turbo Grafx-16

1992
Cosmic Fantasy II / Turbo
Grafx-16
Exile / Turbo Grafx-16

1993
Exile II / Turbo Grafx-16
Vastel / Turbo Grafx-16
Lunar: SS / Sega CD

1994
Vay / Sega CD

1995
Popful Mail / Sega CD
Lunar: EB / Sega CD

1996
Iron Storm / Saturn
Shining Wisdom / Saturn
Dragon Force / Saturn

1997
Raystorm / PlayStation
Sega Ages / PlayStation

1998
Alundra / PlayStation



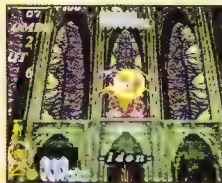
SYSTEM: PlayStation
PRICE: \$49.99
GENRE: Light Gun Shooter
PLAYERS: 1 or 2
ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)
RECOMMENDED: Namco Guncon
PUBLISHER: Working Designs
DEVELOPER: SCEI
WEB: www.workingdesigns.com



▶ With a good amount of secrets, a cooperative two player mode and hidden powerups, there's more to **EG** than simple action.

▶ Working Designs adjusted the difficulty level on the normal setting so American players couldn't just whiz through the game in a sitting.

While the backstory for **Elemental Gearbolt** can seem completely irrelevant to the action within the game, the cinemas are beautifully drawn and presented.



▶ If shooters do make better lovers, then what will a really good shooter make you? Hmm...



GOTTA HAVE IT!



EQUALIZER

EXCELLENT
GOOD
AVERAGE
LACKING
CRAPPY



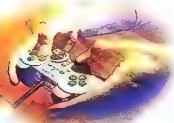
PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
NOT



REVIEW ▶

CIRCUIT BREAKERS



Circuit Breakers is a top down battle royale racing game with a fun multiplayer mode that will keep you playing for hours.

▶ Top down racing games are nothing new. *MicroMachines 2* was one of the 16-bit gaming era's shining moments; but until now, only Mindscape's *Circuit Breakers*

Breakers has lived up to the most demanding nostalgia level and

proven to be a wickedly fun racing title on its own.

Two reasons *Circuit*

Breakers is such an exciting game are its impressive variety and stunning graphics. There are 16 single player and 16 multiplayer tracks, each taking place in one of eight graphically unique worlds that include the jungle, snow, desert, and underwater. Adding to the variety are reverse courses, night courses, and upside down courses you can unlock.

Perhaps the best reason *Circuit Breakers* will get your heart pounding is the four player battle. Using a multitap, four racers can get together and try to knock each other off the tracks. The first person to win a set number of knock offs wins the

round. Offensive driving never felt so good!

Great visuals, thrilling gameplay and a riotous multiplayer mode make *Circuit Breakers* the best top down racer to hit the PlayStation yet. So what are you waiting for? Cheap auto insurance?

BUY IT!

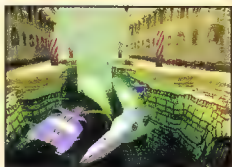
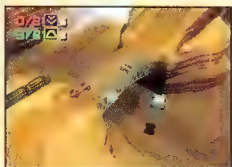


▶ Gorgeous backgrounds are a big part of *Circuit Breakers*, and this scene from the jungle world provides a taste of the environments.

▶ Players can pick up power ups as they race, providing all-grabbing speed boosts and a quicker path to victory.



▶ Knocking other cars off the course is an easy way to insure victory; besides, mayhem is fun!



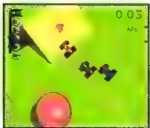
▶ Racing through the canals of Venice is one of the variations that make *Circuit Breakers* so enjoyable.

HEAD TO HEAD

MICROMACHINES V3
PUBLISHER: Midway
DEVELOPER:
Codemasters
PRICE: \$39.95

The *MicroMachines* series established the top down racing genre and when *MicroMachines V3* was released for the PlayStation, it set the standard for 32-bit top down racers. The game is huge, with 32 vehicles, 48 tracks, wild power ups and 1 to 8 player competitions. There's nothing quite like the feel of racing across the felt of a pool table, and top down drivers can't go wrong picking up this game.

MICROMACHINES V3
★★★★



SYSTEM: PlayStation

PRICE: \$49.95

GENRE: Racing

PLAYERS: 1 to 4

ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)

RECOMMENDED: multitap

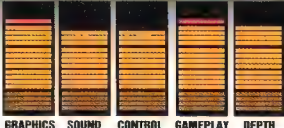
PUBLISHER: Mindscape

DEVELOPER: Supersonic

WEB: www.mindscape.com

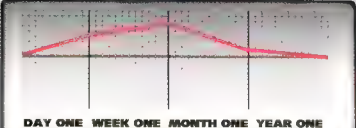
EQUALIZER

EXCELLENT
GOOD
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LACKING
CRAPPY



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
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REVIEW ▶

NFL Xtreme

Despite vehement denials from Sony that **NFL Xtreme** is a knockoff of **NFL Blitz**, the first thing that comes to mind when playing Sony's arcade-style game is that it isn't **NFL Blitz**-like enough.

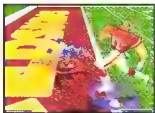
There are high expectations for the game graphics and **NFL Xtreme** doesn't disappoint.

Sony hits the arcade route with **NFL Xtreme**, but misses its target, due to a lack of pain

ON THE HORIZON

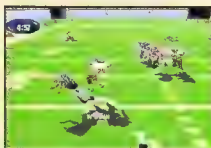
NFL BLITZ
PUBLISHER: Midway Home Ent.
RELEASE DATE: Sept. '98

Although **NFL Xtreme** has no direct competition at the moment, come this Fall Midway Home Ent. will be releasing a home version of its arcade hit **NFL Blitz** for both the PlayStation and Nintendo 64. Early looks at **NFL Blitz** indicate that there will be a slight degradation in graphics, but even early on the gameplay seems to be making the transfer unscathed. Despite the fact that Sony's game claims the 'Xtreme' title, when it comes to extreme arcade-style football action, **NFL Blitz** is still the name that instantly comes to mind.



Since the game features five on five play, more polygons can be dedicated to the individual player graphics than **NFL Gameday**. The players are big, well detailed, and most importantly, move fast and smooth. There are literally no complaints in regards to how **NFL Xtreme** performs technically.

Unfortunately, in spite of all the things that **NFL Xtreme** does right, it falls short in the fun area. There are plenty of special animations that are initially entertaining, but there is little substance to distinguish the game from being anything but **NFL Gameday**-lite. People who find **Gameday** too challenging may find that they enjoy **NFL**



▲ The ball player can perform a variety of 'Xtreme' moves, with the forward flip hurdle certainly being the most entertaining.



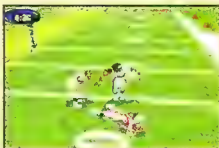
Xtreme, but the fact is there just isn't enough outrageous, frenetic, smash mouth football action to be had here. **NFL Xtreme** would have made a great hidden game within **NFL Gameday**, but gamers looking for a truly fun arcade football game will probably want to wait for **NFL Blitz**.



▲ With 400 polygons utilized per player the graphics in the game are top notch - even when a player gets his helmet knocked off.

▲ The five on five gameplay in **NFL Xtreme** feels more like **NFL Gameday**-lite than a true mayhem-filled arcade style football game.

SYSTEM: PlayStation
PRICE: \$39.99
GENRE: Sports
PLAYERS: 1 or 2
ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)
RECOMMENDED: Memory card
PUBLISHER: Sony
DEVELOPER: 989 Studios
WEB: www.playstation.com



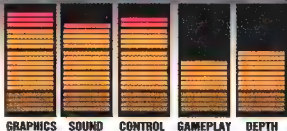
▲ There are dozens of special animations for everything from end zone celebrations to player taunting.

THINK ABOUT IT!



EQUALIZER

EXCELLENT
GOOD
AVERAGE
LACKING
CRAPPY



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
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REVIEW ►



Sony stops the beer cooler in the back of the pickup truck and heads down to the river for some hot boating action.

► There are lots of sports that are usually ignored by the games industry. Huntin', shootin', fishin' and such. In recent years, this trend has changed for the better.

There are now lots of 'real' sports games, for the man in the street. But what about alternative sports for action fans? Turbo

Prop Racing is just such a game.

Technically, it's a tour de force.

TBR has some of the highest frame rates and resolutions you've ever seen on a PlayStation. The frame rate, a slick 30 Fps, is buttery-smooth. The downside is the water, which looks very polygonal and quite, quite firm. The physics are realistic; your boat feels like it's being steered by the engines and rudder and the bouncing motion is watery indeed.

The level design is tortuous and tricky. The boat physics also add to the difficulty level, as does the computer AI, which will waste no time in giving you one hell of a race.

Like F-Zero and WipEout, you'll find yourself heavily dependent on turbos and shortcuts. Fortunately, power-ups floating on the river surface will



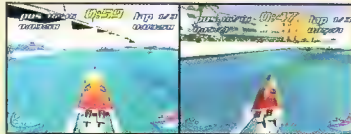
► Obstacles, like this huge, boat-crushing rock, can ruin your whole day at the river.

help this process immensely. So what you have here is a nice, playable cross between Wave Race and WipEout – and that's perhaps all the recommendation you'll need. So grab the beer cooler and get down to the river!

BUY IT!



► The scenery is really sweet and zipping by it creates a real feeling of speed. Let's break out the water skis!



► The steering effect comes from turning the engines in the water, which feels completely different from driving a car.

SYSTEM: PlayStation

PRICE: \$49.95

GENRE: Racing

PLAYERS: 1 or 2

ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)

RECOMMENDED: Dual shock

PUBLISHER: Sony

DEVELOPER: SCE

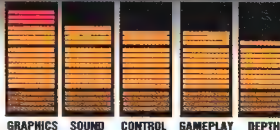
WEB: www.sony.com



► The computer AI can be some tough competition. Our reviewer never did get out of last place in this race, but then again, he's French, so what did you expect?

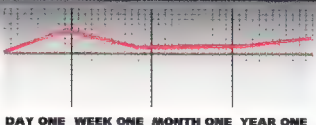
EQUALIZER

EXCELLENT
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LACKING
CRAPPY



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
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NOT



REVIEW ▶



The last Sega title to emerge

for the Saturn is ironically one of the best strategy RPGs of the year and a must have game for any system

HEAD TO HEAD

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS
SYSTEM: PlayStation
PUBLISHER: SCEA

FF Tactics introduced the masses to tactical turn-based combat on a large scale and packed it with an interesting job system interwoven into a complex series of maps and options. The storyline was genuine medieval melodrama with backstabbing politicians, kidnapped princesses, betrayal, and the like, but managed to strike upon some very human issues.

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS
★★★★★



SHINING FORCE



▶ **Shining Force III** is definitely everything that a strategy RPG should be, with excellent battle graphics, a clever 'linking' mode of attacks and a complicated storyline involving power plays and politics between warring kingdoms. This particular title was to serve as the first 'scenario' in a set of three highly innovative SF games

which, if you kept your save data from each game, would affect the outcome and gameplay of the following titles in the series

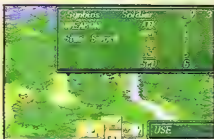
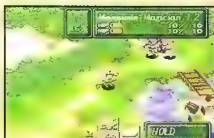
Unfortunately, the last two titles will only see the light of day in Japan and not in the US. But even so, the game holds up remarkably well as a stand alone title with all the markings of previous **Shining Force** games (excellent battle system, a well told story, sharp graphics) but with the bonus of new 3D battle scenes and polygonal landscapes.

Although it's a shame that this game had to release so late in the Saturn's lifespan, **Shining**

▶ The terrain is now variable to promote the use of various types of fighting classes in order to proceed through different areas.



Force III is a title that no role-playing enthusiast should be



▶ The new battle scenes are amazing and even include some rough, but nifty, voice overs during attacks. This is gonna be cool!

▶ Menus and the battle interface are very simple, but allow for a good variety of options and actions to be carried out during combat.

▶ The look of **Shining Force III** is incredibly similar to **Shining the Holy Ark**, but are fine-tuned for a beautiful effect.

without. Detailed graphics and smart battle systems make it a must have and will keep fans looking to the future for the inevitable Dreamcast continuation of a truly remarkable series.

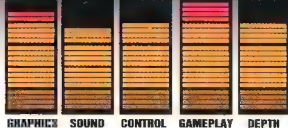
SYSTEM: Saturn
PRICE: \$54.99
GENRE: Strategy/RPG
PLAYERS: 1
ESRB RATING: T (Teen)
PUBLISHER: Sega
DEVELOPER:
Camelot/Sonic Team
WEB: www.sega.com

GOTTA HAVE IT!



EQUALIZER

EXCELLENT
GOOD
AVERAGE
LACKING
CRAPPY



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
NOT



International Superstar SOCCER '98

Anyone who's a fan of sports videogames knows that there is usually one game that stands head and shoulders above its competition and is the shining example for the sport it represents. For football, the game is Sony's **NFL Gameday '98**

for PlayStation; for baseball, it is Sega's **World Series Baseball '98** for Saturn; for hockey, it is EA Sports' **NHL '98** for PlayStation,

and for soccer, the standard of excellence has been set by **International Superstar Soccer** for the N64.

Of course, when a game is already at the head of its class, there is always the fear that a 'new and improved' sequel will just screw things up. Konami's own **NBA In The Zone '98** is a prime example of this phenomena. Thankfully, the developers charged with creating **ISS '98** focused on gameplay

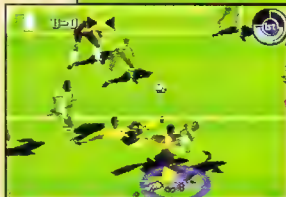
For all soccer video games, the standard of excellence has been set by **International Superstar Soccer** for the Nintendo 64.

tweaks and the addition of a few well thought out features instead of attempting to reinvent the proverbial wheel. The result? The perfect soccer game just became a little bit more perfect.

Technically, **ISS '98** is an N64 tour de force. There is some debate in the Game Buyer offices whether the graphics are a smidge blurrier than last year's game, but overall, **ISS '98** features graphics and player animations that are the most fluid and realistic to ever grace a soccer videogame. And these aren't the type of game graphics that merely look good on screen. **ISS '98**'s game graphics look authentic, but the real key is how well the visuals respond to control inputs by the players. Everything reacts subtly - fast and smooth. Even the nine stadium environments in the game are beautifully rendered, each with a



From pin point passes in the open field, to point blank shots in front of the goal, the gameplay in **ISS '98** is sweet perfection.



distinct look that help complete the atmosphere of the game. Camera angles are always a sticking point in sports games, but **ISS '98** offers a satisfying level of adjustability thanks in particular to the addition of a vertical or 'end zone' view.

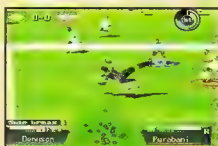
Sound, usually an N64 weakness, is

astoundingly good considering the limited storage capacity of a cartridge game. English announcer Tony Gubba provides the limited, but satisfying, commentary and the developers have done a fine job of syncing the play by play to the action and preventing any overly irritating repetition of phrases.

Still, it is the gameplay in **ISS '98** that ultimately distinguishes it from its competition. The player is treated to the smoothest and most balanced gameplay to ever grace a soccer game. The passing system in particular is noteworthy. **ISS** has always been renowned for the level of individual player control it allows, but this year the game allows for up to six strategies (center break, side break, offside trap,



Despite how great the close up views appear, the game is best played utilizing the most distant camera angle. This year, Konami has also managed to include an 'end zone' or vertical view in addition to the classic 'sideline' (horizontal) view.



The better goalkeepers play for the more powerful international teams, but even the worst goalie features a computer AI that puts most other soccer games to shame.

FLASHBACK

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER 64
PUBLISHER: Konami
SYSTEM: N64

With little fanfare (EA Sport's dismal FIFA 64 was more eagerly anticipated), Konami released the awkwardly titled **International Superstar Soccer 64**. Fortunately for sports starved N64 owners, the title was the only awkward feature of the superb game. This soccer game wasn't just the best soccer on N64, but rather, was the best soccer videogame ever created. **ISS 64** offered stunning graphics, balanced gameplay, unprecedented individual player control, and a challenging computer AI.

A problem that was repeated in the sequel though, was the lack of real player names. Because the licensing is different in Japan, we have to make do with bastardized names, so Ronaldo becomes Donaldo. Very sad, but the player stats are still accurate and it becomes a fun guessing game.

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER 64
★★★★★



SYSTEM: Nintendo 64
PRICE: \$59.99
GENRE: Sports
PLAYERS: 1 TO 4
ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)
RECOMMENDED: Controller pak
PUBLISHER: Konami
DEVELOPER: Konami
WEB: www.konami.com

WELL PRESENTED

N64 games have traditionally had trouble equalling the PlayStation when it comes to the game presentation arena. ISS '98 proves the exception and manages to best its PlayStation cousin with a variety of clear-up animations that capture the atmosphere of a soccer game to perfection.



Player animations are incredibly realistic but there is never a sense of 'control lag' as the player waits for a motion captured animation sequence to complete.



Individual player control is extraordinary and allows the player to execute everything from headers to soccer kicks at the touch of a precisely timed button press.

etc.) to be assigned to a team which can then be easily accessed and implemented during game-play. ISS '98's AI has been massaged and tweaked to provide even more satisfying one player games. Multiplayer games are as satisfying as ever.

The only real complaint that can be leveled at ISS '98 is its lack of a license, which prevents it from featuring real life players in the game. If ISS '98 makes the

stadium full of money that it deserves, we're sure that Konami won't mind forking out a few bucks for licenses next year. Then everyone better look out!



A substitution is announced in the new FIFA style, with an electronic scoreboard. In the olden days, the numbers were represented by pigs and doves and they were held aloft by the Village Virgin or sometimes a witch.



THE BEAUTIFUL SPORT

As these replay screenshots show, the gameplay intricacies of ISS '98 provide the most authentic and entertaining soccer experience to be had on a game console. Everything happens in a split second, but the game player is never left with the feeling that he is not directing the action. Simply brilliant.



After receiving a beautiful centering pass, the Nigerian player manages to get off a solid try only to be foiled by a spectacular save by the Jamaican goalie.



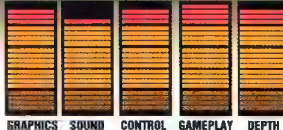
Unfortunately, the goalkeeper is unable to hold on to the ball and the Nigerian player recovers in time to slide kick the ball into the goal past the sprawled goaltender.



Players on both teams can only stand by and watch as the ball finds its home in the back of the net! For the Jamaicans it is an agonizing moment, for the Nigerians it is time for jubilation.

EQUALIZER

EXCELLENT
GOOD
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LACKING
CRAPPY



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
NOT



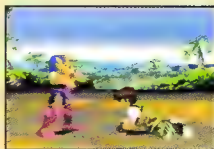
FLYING DRAGON

Released as **Flying Dragon Twin** in Japan, Natsume has picked up the Culture Brain-developed fighter for US distribution. Undergoing a slight name change, **Flying Dragon** is scheduled to ship for Nintendo 64 this August. While the title does offer up a plethora of unique options and features for a

fighting title, the gameplay and graphic finesse to back them up are sorely missing.

Flying Dragon features two gameplay modes:

super-deformed or virtual fighters. Super-deformed mode enables players to equip their fighters with weapons and technique enhancements gained after winning fights. Virtual mode has the emphasis on action rather than strategy. Each mode serves up nearly ten playable characters, each with various strengths and weaknesses. The game features a wide selection of



gameplay modes, from regular tournaments to group battles and even a practice mode.

The problem is that the game's fighting engine isn't very complex and often leaves players mashing buttons in frustration. What it comes down to is options and features over gameplay and graphics.

Admittedly, **Flying Dragon** isn't a terrible fighter, especially

▶ In super-deformed mode, characters will sometimes crawl into battle.



▶ The treasure box enables players to equip their fighter with special enhancements.

by Nintendo 64 standards, but it's still a far cry from a good one. You should think about this one.

PREQUEL

Flying Dragon has changed little from its Japanese predecessor, **Flying Dragon Twin**, but a few minor adjustments have been implemented, mostly in the game's visual flair, or lack thereof. Natsume has brightened up the game's backgrounds and improved framerates, but most gamers probably won't even notice a difference between the two versions. That's kinda sad...



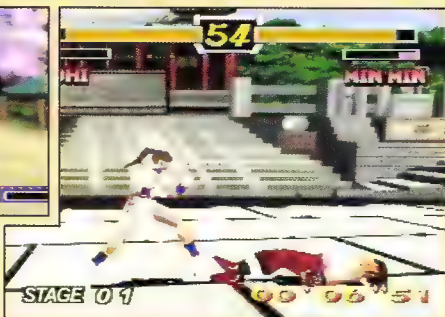
Eight characters, plus one hidden, are selectable in each of the game's two modes.

THINK ABOUT IT!



▶ Here we see one super-deformed fighter squishing another.

▶ In virtual mode, fighters are full-sized and action is emphasized.



SYSTEM: Nintendo 64

PRICE: \$59.99

GENRE: Fighting

PLAYERS: 1 or 2

ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)

RECOMMENDED: Rumble pak

PUBLISHER: Natsume

DEVELOPER: Culture Brain

WEB: www.nintendo.com

EQUALIZER

EXCELLENT
GOOD
AVERAGE
LACKING
CRAPPY



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
NOT



REVIEW

VIRTUAL CHESS 64



The 3D chess board is a pretty cool thing to see.

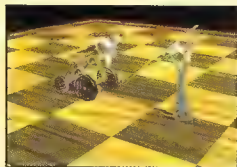
It's a pretty cool thing to see. It's a pretty cool thing to see.

If you don't like chess, this game is not going to change your mind. But if chess happens to be a passion of yours, **Virtual Chess** is an excellent choice.

The number of options should please the most hardened fans, including indicators, meditation, setups, and more.

But the game's best feature is the easily the Tutorial Mode. Rather than confusing beginning players with a lengthy manual, Titus' mascot, Titus the Fox, will teach anyone chess while displaying text and moves on screen. It's ideal for children, but it also doesn't forget advanced rules, such as Castling, En Passant Capture, and Pawn's Promotion. For more experienced players, the Tutorial Mode offers a wealth of tactics and strategy

The hi-res 3D board can be rotated freely. Too bad there aren't different chess sets in the 3D mode.



The non-interactive 3D battle sequences get old really quickly. But that's not what you would buy this game for, anyway.

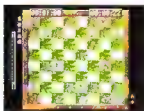


Virtual Chess 64 even allows difficult moves, like the en passant, which is basically the only thing saving White's butt at the moment.

THE BRAINS

Virtual Chess 64 offers 12 levels of difficulty, using Titus' award-winning Virtual Chess engine that won the '96 and '97 World Microcomputer Chess Championship Professional Category and the '95 Harvard Cup. Even on the lower levels, Virtual Chess 64 is tough to beat.

For beginning players, Titus included two easier levels, where the game purposefully makes mistakes based on the human player's game. The problem with Artificial Stupidity is that if you lose, you can tell yourself: 'Hey, I'm dumber than a computer programmed to be dumber than me.'



options, like different mate schemes, trapping, classic games, and endings

Of course, when it comes to action, **Virtual Chess** can't compete with games like **1080 Snowboarding** or **Banjo-Kazooie**, but if you are looking for a strong chess computer (that can most certainly kick your butt) for a low price or you have always wanted to learn chess and are looking for a patient teacher, **Virtual Chess 64** is the game to get



Titus the Fox teaches everything there is to know about chess in the Innovative Tutorial Mode.

SYSTEM: Nintendo 64

PRICE: \$24.99

GENRE: Strategy

PLAYERS: 1-4

ESRB RATING: E (Everyone)

RECOMMENDED: Controller pack

PUBLISHER: Titus

DEVELOPER: Titus

WEB: www.rhsgames.com

THINK ABOUT IT!



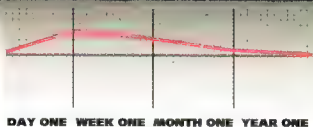
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PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
NOT



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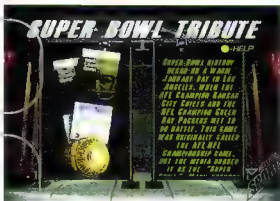
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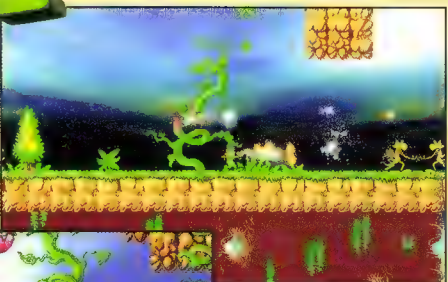
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JAZZ JACKRABBIT 2



JAZZ JACKRABBIT 2



Dismissing of the obvious

that Jazz Jackrabbit 2 is a

game that is a

game that is a

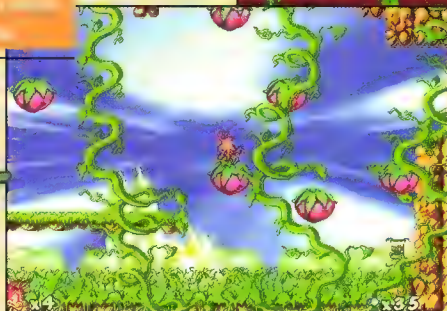
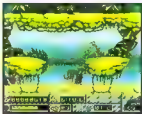


FLASHBACK

JAZZ JACKRABBIT
DEVELOPER:
Epic MegaGames

The first Jazz Jackrabbit was groundbreaking for PC gamers back in 1994. At the time, 3D acceleration was a vision of the future, and the PC was a second rate (at best) gaming machine compared to the SNES and Genesis. Gamers who wanted platform action turned to Epic's shareware smash hit for their platforming fix and as a result, put Epic MegaGames on the map.

JAZZ JACKRABBIT
★★★★



Two dimensional platform games have largely been ignored in the last several years, as just about every developer seeks to embrace the latest 3D technologies. For this reason, it is bizarre and yet strangely satisfying that Jazz Jackrabbit 2 has thumbed its nose at the establishment and offered up one of

OK, we give up. We don't know what the heck they're doing here. Maybe they're making wine, in the old French tradition...

variety of ordinance at their disposal to dispatch all of the nasty enemies that lie in their path. Several varieties of missiles, bouncing projectiles, flamethrowers and more will provide the needed defenses.

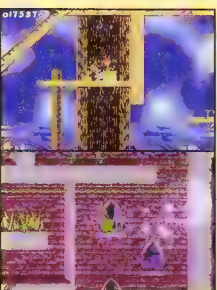
Game control is fairly straightforward with

the best 2D platform games ever made, Jazz Jackrabbit 2.

PC gamers have never had a solid platform game to call their own, but with Jazz 2, console owners may find themselves more than a little envious. The game puts players in the role of Jazz Jackrabbit or his brother Spaz, each of which has their own special jumping characteristics (which results in a different game depending upon the character you select). In addition to the expected running and jumping elements, players will have a

Flame throwers, homing missiles, double rockets, dynamite and more are all at your disposal. Kill that darn weed!

Some of the backgrounds take on the airs of a fairy tale. This scene could have been taken straight out of Jack and the Beanstalk. Got any magic beans?



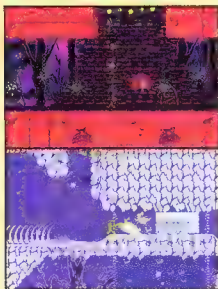
And what platform game would be complete without the old 'jumping from window to window' routine? Yep, Jazz Jackrabbit 2 has got it all!

SYSTEM:	PC
PRICE:	\$34.99
GENRE:	2D Platform
PLAYERS:	1 to 16
ESRB RATING:	E (Everyone)
RECOMMENDED:	Game pad
PUBLISHER:	Epic MegaGames/GOO
DEVELOPER:	Project Two/Orange Games
WEB:	www.jazzjackrabbit.com

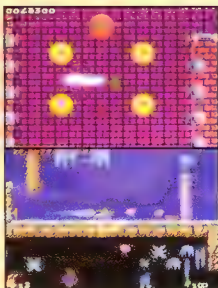
Fans of the Sonic series will recognize borrowed elements such as the pinball areas.

and more weapons. One of the nicest things about the game is that if the player misses something, he can always backtrack in the level to go back and get it. The result is an experience that feels like one giant contiguous world.

In terms of longevity, the game has several different



Extensive use of transparency and support of high resolutions provides nice eye candy.



Environments include both above and below ground features for twice the gaming fun. We can't believe we just wrote that...

episodes and difficulty levels that should keep gamers busy for hours.

One of the areas that Jazz 2 really excels in is its multiplayer modes. Console gamers turn green with envy when they find out that the game supports a cooperative mode for you and some buddies to work together as well as a deathmatch mode that allows you to slice and dice one another. Other modes included are capture the flag, racing and



Not too many obstacles can stand in the way of Jazz Jackrabbit's lightning speed! Hey, is that a lava lamp?

treasure hunting. The capture the flag mode is particularly deep as two teams battle one another to bring the opposing team's flag back to their base. Multiplayer modes can be accessed either via a split-screen, LAN or even Internet. The result is an outstanding party game where up to four players can compete.

Finally, if you should tire of the dozens of levels provided for you, Epic has included a fully functional level editor for you to create your

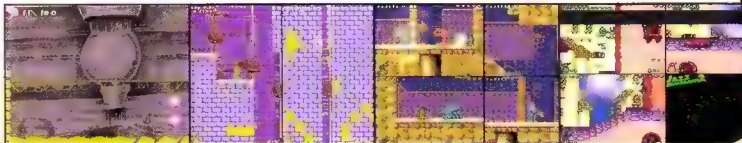
own. Complete tile sets from every level are available and if you're really ambitious, you can even make your own. How's that for getting your money's worth?

BUY IT!



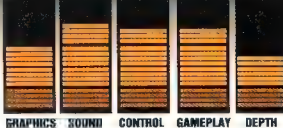
MULTI-PLAYER GAMES

One area where Jazz 2 really stands out from other 2D platformers is with its multiplayer modes. There's nothing quite like running through levels with a friend or two.



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LACKING
CRAPPY



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
▲
NOT



ADDICTION! Pinball

Most computer pinball games barely resemble the flashing, tweeting pinball machines of bars and pool halls, but Microprose's **Addiction Pinball** is astonishingly realistic, with sights and sounds you would swear were straight out of the real thing.

Addiction Pinball's physics model completes the experience. The ball moves and bounces exactly as it should. Another nice physics feature is the nudge, which allows you to bump the machine and give the ball a gentle push in the right direction or yield a Tilt.

Addiction's two tables are based on previous Team 17 games **Worms** and **World Rally Fever**. Each table has thematic modes that enhance the experience.

Anyone who likes pinball games will immediately fall in love with **Addiction**. Its low system requirements (no 3D card required) and perfect game play make it a genuinely fun game for just about anyone.

Both tables are incredibly detailed, from chrome highlights to shadows and colored light effects.

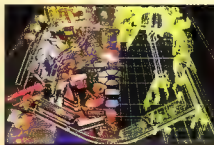


Complex tables, such as the above, guarantee plenty of gameplay, as well as a chance of getting lost forever. Anyone seen the ball?

Gamers familiar with another Team 17 hit, **Worms**, will be instantly familiar with the obstacles of the **Worms** pinball table.

Unfortunately, not everyone is familiar with **Worms** or **World Rally Fever**, so for those gamers, a lot of the nuance and craft that went into **Addiction Pinball** may go unnoticed.

The tables are some of the most realistically rendered objects in any computer game this year.



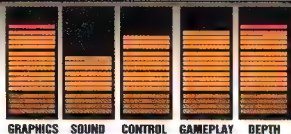
SYSTEM: Pentium 75
PRICE: \$49.95
GENRE: Pinball
PLAYERS: 1
ESRB RATING: E
RECOMMENDED: No
PUBLISHER: Microprose
DEVELOPER: Microprose
WEB: www.microprose.com

BUY IT!



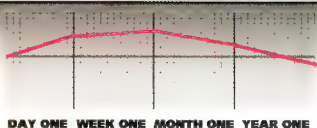
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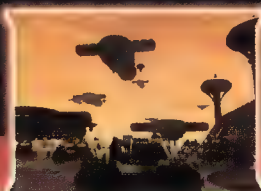


PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

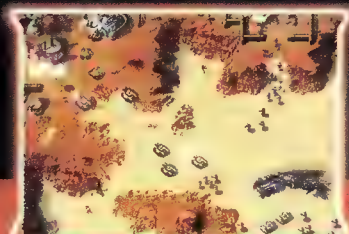
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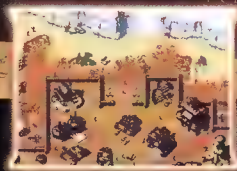


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REVIEW ▶

DOMINION: Storm over Gift 3



▶ **Dominion** isn't necessarily bad, but it hardly lives up to the storm of hype that has been surrounding Ion Storm.

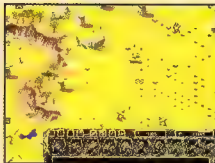
The game features a variety of units used by all four of the game's races. Each unit has a balanced function within the game, and strategic use

of the units is enforced by the game's unique campaigns. The interface enables easy access to all the game's features, from organizing infantry to building units and establishing infrastruc-



▶ Bridges over rivers and other environmental objects force players to drop mob tactics.

SYSTEM:
PRICE:
GENRE:
PLAYERS:
ESRB RATING:
RECOMMENDED: Total
PUBLISHER:
DEVELOPER:
WEB:



▶ Arctic battles look just like the desert battles, only white... Why wasn't there more thought put into the scenario design?



ture. How each unit is assembled and in what order is completely within the user's control. New units are presented during the game as players build in strength and number.

The graphics are poor and repetitious, with very little variety to speak of. The cut scenes are little more impressive, but hardly add to the overall look. Just as weak is the multiplayer game, which hardly separates the four

races, which makes the game feel sterile.

Had it been released in a timely fashion, **Dominion** may have been considered a pioneer of the genre. Sadly, it is yet another 'me, too' product.

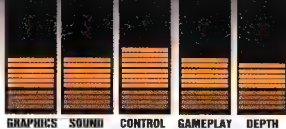
THINK ABOUT IT!



▶ Barren, uninteresting, landscapes make up most of the backdrops. Even during the game's more intense moments, **Dominion** just doesn't feel 'epic'.

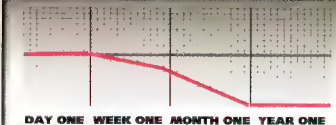
EQUALIZER

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AVERAGE
LACKING
CRAPPY



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
▲
▼
NOT



REVIEW



GAME, NET, and Match

▶ Tennis games are a rare breed on the PC, and if the artificial intelligence of the computer players in **Game, Net & Match** is any indication, it's probably a good thing that there aren't more.

If you have a modicum of coordination, and an ounce of smarts, it will take no more than 15 minutes for

you to baffle the computer players.

Blue Byte is providing a matchmaking service for owners of the game, but the only server available at the time of this review is in Germany, so lag was a problem, but when playing locally

SYSTEM:

PRICE: _____

GENRE: _____

PLAYERS: _____

ESRB RATING: _____

RECOMMENDED: _____

PUBLISHER: _____

DEVELOPER: _____

WEB: _____

REQUIRES

MINIMUM
Pentium 133
Windows 95
16MB RAM
72MB Available Hard
Drive Space
4X CD-Rom Drive

RECOMMENDED
Pentium 166
32MB RAM
224MB Available Hard
Drive Space
6X CD-Rom Drive
Direct3D Compatible
Graphics Accelerator
Direct X Compatible
Sound Card
Internet or LAN access

▶ The court-side graphics are a mixed bag. Most of the objects look decent, but that crowd is a real eyesore.

The game sounds are also up and down – the announcers are boring and repetitive, but the crowd will cheer good play appropriately.



▶ The interface is well designed. You can play a doubles match (not online, unfortunately), but you can't play with a computer teammate.



▶ The polygonal players appear blocky and stiff when moving between points. Luckily, they look much better during gameplay, with fairly smooth animations (with a 3D accelerator).

through the German server, the lag all but disappeared and the action was fast and fun.

You set up your player using a total of 30 points to be attributed to skills such as backhand, service, etc., and as you win games, your skills will improve. The server keeps track of the action and posts the results for all to see.

Game, Net & Match is the definition of our 'Think About It' rating. If you're only interested in solo play, you should run screaming in the opposite direction. It's up to you to decide if you want to play full



▶ You can play on four different surfaces, which will affect the speed of the action; here we see a clay court, but you can also choose from concrete, carpet, and grass.

▶ The training mode allows you to practice any type of return, from deep lobs to cross-court rockets. The controls are simple, with each button on the game pad assigned to a different kind of shot.

price for half a game. Hmm... maybe you should spend your money on a new tennis racket

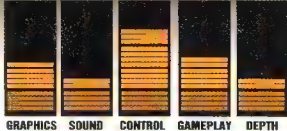


THINK ABOUT IT!



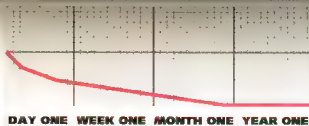
EQUALIZER

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PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

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X-FILES The Game



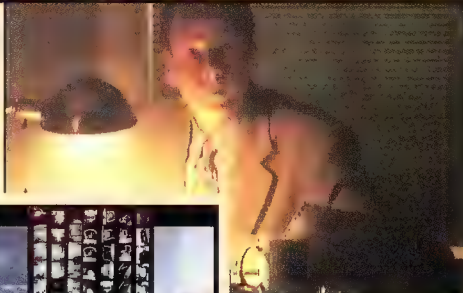
Normally we don't touch so-called Interactive Movies, but X-Files The Game is a heck of a lot more interactive than most. Add to that the best production values we've ever seen on a CD-ROM and you have something much bigger than a piece of X-Files fan-

dom. The game takes you one step back from

agents Scully and Mulder, putting you in the shoes of Agent Craig Willmore. Fans will be disappointed that they don't get to "be" Spooky or Dana, but it does help with the suspension of disbelief. In no time at all you find yourself absorbed in a compelling adventure. Gameplay is reminiscent of ancient Activision

System: PC/Power Mac CD ROM
Price: \$49.99
Genre: Interactive Movie
Players: One
ESRB rating: Teen
Recommended: *Darkness*
Publisher: Fox Interactive
Developer: Hyperbole Studios
Web: www.foxinteractive.com

Sleuthing around and interacting with characters from the actual TV show will appeal to X-Files fans.



Loaded with nicely integrated FMV outscenes, the game has a definite cinematic feel that creates an air of mystery and intrigue for players.

The assortment of clues to ponder range between helpful and completely obscure at times.

game Hacker - you have to deal with a seemingly endless (the game spans five CDs) series of puzzles and problems. These are all pretty linear and simple, but the excellent full motion video draws you into the constantly unfolding plot. It's not all puzzle solving, you have a gun. Action is limited and simple, but you can scale difficulty to suit yourself and have a relaxed game.

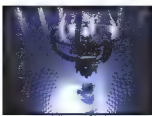
There are problems with X-Files The Game, but most of these can be ignored as the creepy conspiracy unfolds. So what's the actual plot of this game? Well, let's just say the truth is out there.

HEAD TO HEAD

OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS
publisher: Interplay
system: PC

Interplay's artsy graphic adventure incorporates much more varied types of action than the X-Files game, both are strictly point-and-click titles with a layer of quiet intensity and involvement that ensure an immersive experience for the gamer. X-Files: The Game has a definite fan appeal, while Of Light and Darkness is more of an adventurous leap for the genre.

OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS
★★★★



BUY IT!

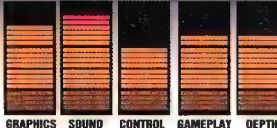


Your personal message pad in the game allows you to check your current location and receive cryptic messages from the head office.



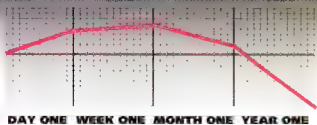
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PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
NOT



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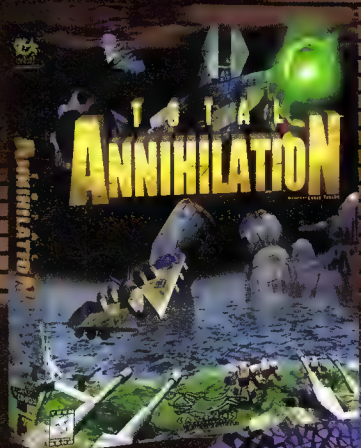
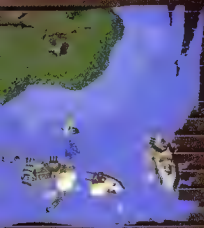
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—GameSpot Editors

Game of the Year

—GameSpot Reader's Choice Awards

Best Real-Time Strategy Game

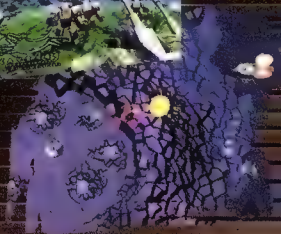
—PC Gamer On-Line, Reader's Choice Award

Best Real-Time Strategy Game

—Adrenaline Vault

Best Real-Time Strategy Game

—Ultra Game Player's magazine



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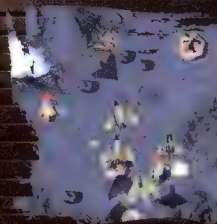
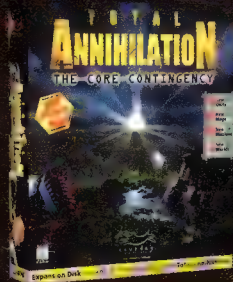
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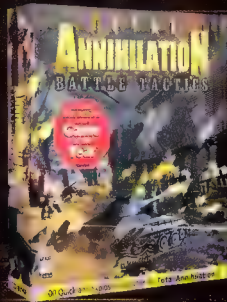
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REVIEW ▶

REDJACK: Revenge of the Brethren



▶ The point and click graphic adventure is kind of like the multiple choice quiz of the gaming world. You're shown the answers and you pick what you hope is the right one. These games have a small, cult-like following, but most people are looking for a little more action in their games.

Along comes *Redjack: Revenge of the Brethren*. You guide an unemployed slacker through a beautifully illustrated world populated with all manner of pirate movie-types. So what's wrong with that?

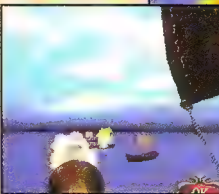
Well, there are a few things that take *Redjack* out of the Big Fun League. Get used to wandering around a lot before you find out what you're supposed to do. The very first puzzle in a game like this needs to be a bit better defined.

Secondly, the voice acting ain't all that great. Seems like the director just grabbed the mall room guy and a secretary to read the script instead of hiring real actors.

On the plus side, *Redjack's* graphics are really sweet and the music and sound effects are cool, too. Playing this game is like being in an old Errol Flynn movie, without Alan Hale, of course. If this kind of game is your cup of tea, then go out and buy it. Otherwise, it might be smart to wait until another ship comes in.

▶ You'll have to learn how to handle a sword. Awast, ye lubber!

▶ This is Lylo (Lylo?). Meet him first or you'll wander forever. Lylo (Lylo???) will teach you to fight, drink ale, and do other sordid pirate things.



▶ You'll also need to practice up on your cannon skills. Fire!

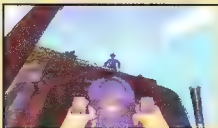


▶ This is Nick. He burns up real good, don't he? Burn, baby, burn!

SYSTEM:
PRICE:
GENRE:
PLAYERS:
ESRB RATING:
RECOMMENDED:
PUBLISHER:
DEVELOPER:
WEB:



▶ Well, you're either a pirate or some kind of tropical funboy...



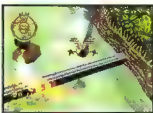
▶ Quick, man! Light the fuse!!! Aim right between his beady eyes...

HEAD TO HEAD

SHIPWRECKERS
PUBLISHER: Psygnosis
PRICE: \$49.95

For those wannabe pirates out there who prefer a bit more action in their high seas hijinks, there's *Shipwreckers*, a fun little action title which involves driving your pirate ship past weird obstacles like huge buzzsaws and blowing stuff up with your cannon. It's also got a multi-player mode, assuming, of course, that you've got a multitap in your treasure chest, matey!

SHIPWRECKERS
★★★★

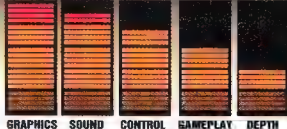


THINK ABOUT IT!



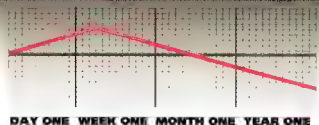
EQUALIZER

EXCELLENT
GOOD
AVERAGE
LACKING
CRAPPY



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
NOT



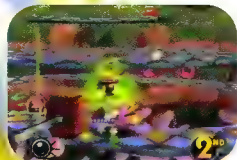
Q-TEE'S A KNOCKOUT...



Eight spherical characters from silly to sinister.



Rock' N Roll in Battle Mode!



Watch out for Freeze Bombs, Trap Doors and Floaty Fans.

Pink and perky Q-Tee says flattery will get you nowhere but "flattening" will get you everywhere. That's exactly what she does as she races to the top of over 100 towering tracks, grabbing up all the bombs, mines, and pickups she can find. Whether she's racing against you in a 4-player free-for-all, or turbo-rolling you into the acid baths below; she's the kind of girl who'll make your rumble pak **rumble** as she blows you a kiss and whizzes by you to the finish line.

IGGY'S
reckin' balls™



Acclaim
www.acclaim.net

REVIEW ▶

World of COMBAT 2000



▶ Novalogic presents us with a value-packed compilation of its best simulation titles from 1997. One of the problems here, is that true sim fans will probably already own one or more of these. If they don't own any, it's a no-brainer, stop reading and go buy this now.

The games are all excel-

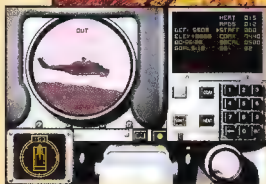
lent: **Comanche 3** is a brilliant 3D chopper simulation, using voxel technology which runs very smoothly without massive hardware upgrades. **F-22 Lightning II** is a very accessible and action-packed flight sim and **Armored Fist 2**, while slower and less attractive, still has huge depth and long term playability.

The graphics vary pretty wildly from game – **F22** is the cleanest and sharpest of the lot, although the dense nature of **Comanche's** voxel technology has its own appeal. There's no compromise here, and for that, Novalogic is to be congratulated. These are full versions of the games, with complete manuals and overlays and so value for money is the key factor. You basically get all three games for the price of one. Since each



▶ The F-22 Lightning is one mean mother of a fighter, so handle it real carefully, OK?

▶ Use the forward looking, long range TV camera to identify other flying objects as friend or foe.

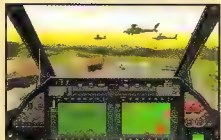
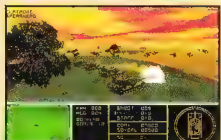
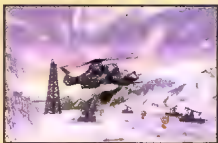


of the games is still on par with any recent competing product, **World of Combat 2000** is something of a slam dunk.

▶ **AF II** is one of the best tank sims available today, with its sweet graphics and tight control.

▶ Fly the unfriendly skies in a **Comanche** attack helicopter. Your enemies will be impressed!

▶ Game scenarios cover every imaginable terrain.

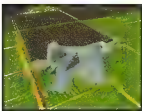


GOTTA HAVE IT!



WHAT'S A VOXEL?

There's polygons, there's pixels, and then there's Voxels. A Voxel is a pixel with depth. It's 3D, it's a pixel. Using a 3D coordinate system, Voxels replace polygons and are far more memory efficient. Textures don't really exist in Voxel systems, instead, you just color the pixels to create the effect of a texture. This also means more work for programmers and less for the graphic artists. Novalogic Voxelspace 2 engine, which is used in **Armored Fist 2**, also allows the overlaying of polygons in the same environment – so flexible enough to add real textures as well as 'faked' Voxel pixels.



SYSTEM:

PRICE:

GENRE:

PLAYERS:

ESRB RATING:

RECOMMENDED:

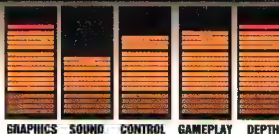
PUBLISHER:

DEVELOPER:

WEB:

EQUALIZER

EXCELLENT
GOOD
AVERAGE
LACKING
CRAPPY



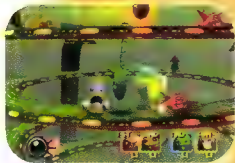
PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH

HOT
NOT





Over 100 towering tracks make it a challenge to keep your ball bearings.



Follow the bouncing ball through five modes of play!



4 heads are better than one! Get in on the 4-player action.

BUT IGGY'S THE SWINGIN' KING
OF THE RECKIN' BALL CREW!



He's a "T-Wrecks" tearing up over 100 twisting, towering tracks!

He's a rumblin' rollin' reptile with turbo action!

He's Iggys, the head honcho of the ballsiest racing game you've ever seen.

Race, roll, and bounce to the top of Pushie, Stompie, and Spikie infested towers. So, all you bigheads, warheads, and blockheads—tap into IGGY'S RECKIN' BALLS and 'Reck the Joint!



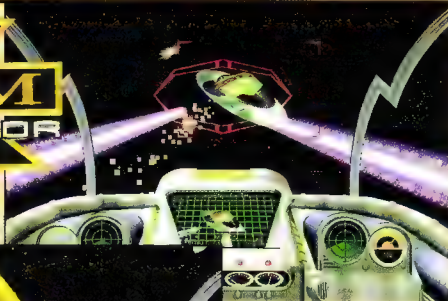
GGY'S RECKIN' BALLS™ & © 1998 Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. All other characters, names, and the design are trademarks of Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. Acclaim is a registered trademark of Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. © 1998 Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Developed by: Quake Entertainment. Nintendo 64 and the 64 logo are trademarks of Nintendo of America, Inc. © 1996 Nintendo of America, Inc.



REVIEW ▶



X-COM Interceptor

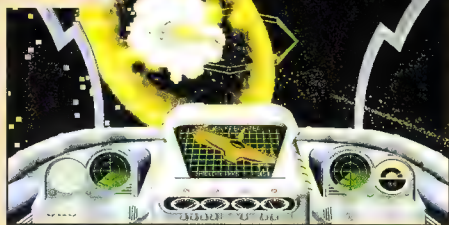


Interceptor is a turn-based strategy game that lets you control a fleet of X-COM fighters in a space combat sim.

REQUIRES

MINIMUM
Pentium 133
3D Graphics Accelerator
Windows 95/98
16 MB of RAM
85 MB Free
Hard Drive Space
CD-ROM Drive

RECOMMENDED
Pentium 200
3DFX Graphics Accelerator
Windows 95/98
32 MB of RAM
265 MB Free
Hard Drive Space
8x CD-ROM Drive

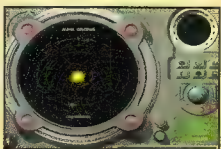


Fans of the X-COM series know it as turn-based strategy games, with resource management, technology research, and lots of nasty aliens to hunt down and kill. The biggest similarity to *Interceptor* is that there are still plenty of aliens to hunt down and kill.

Chronologically, the game takes place between the second X-COM game, *Terrors from the Deep*, and last year's X-COM: *Apocalypse*. The Earth has been ravaged by the war with the aliens, so humanity is looking to the depths of space for sources of precious metals and resources.

It's during this migration to the stars that the X-COM forces take the war to the aliens.

Interceptor is first and foremost a space combat sim. Players spend the majority of their time hurtling through space in a Transtellar X-1A Lighting II fighter, engaged in fast and furious dog fighting with saucer-shaped alien craft. Like previous X-

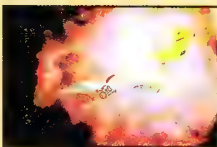


COM games, players still have to hire pilots, purchase supplies and select locations for bases and build them up as bastions against the alien aggressors. As the campaign progresses, the player can use these bases to analyze captured alien technology and provide advanced weaponry, like the doppelganger missile and ship upgrades, but these strategic elements are a minor part of the game, giving the flavor of X-COM without the massive resource management.

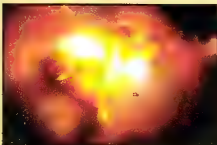
To keep space sim fans happy, the strategic planning

△ We love the smell of toasted aliens in the morning.

△ In a departure from previous X-COM games, *Interceptor* is primarily about combat, with tactical considerations a minor part of gameplay.

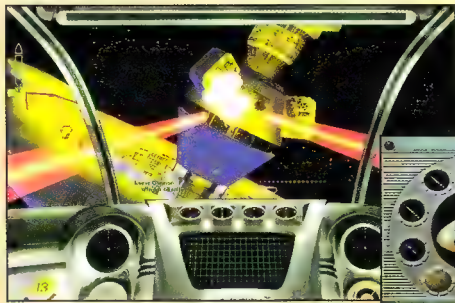


△ Alien ships retain the distinctive X-COM look they've had throughout the series.



△ *Interceptor's* graphics, while not breathtaking, are still quite good, and give the player a good sense of interstellar dog fighting.

SYSTEM: PC
PRICE: \$49.99
GENRE: Space Strategy
PLAYERS: 1 to 8
ESRB RATING: T (Teen)
RECOMMENDED: Xenophobia
PUBLISHER: Microprose
DEVELOPER: Microprose
WEB: www.microprose.com



Capital ships in X-COM may require a number of sorties to cripple or destroy.

and base management is relatively easy. Bases have a simple interface screen with easy access to important features, like monitoring alien activity, equipping ships, and adding to the base.

Although fans of previous X-COM games may not approve of the new direction the series is taking, the UFOpedia should still appeal to even the most hardcore followers. Its main function is to aid the player's technology research - it also has synopsis of the previous games in the series and a listing of all the ships, weapons, and technologies in the X-COM universe.

Interceptor has all the features

one would expect of a space combat game. Pilots can outfit their own ships as they see fit, dragging and dropping lasers and missiles on to the Lightning fighter's hard points. There's also an extensive multiplayer mode, in which up to eight pilots can develop on their own ships and do battle in free for all or team dogfights. If a player isn't up to snuff on the battlefield, a combat simulator is provided for immediate action.

What it lacks in eye candy, *Interceptor* makes up for in design. Everything reinforces the impressions players would have if they'd actually been able to fly the Interceptors of earlier games. The sound effects and music are also solidly produced, adding to the quality of the game.

The only issue holding this title

back is that it doesn't quite cross the ephemeral line that distinguishes the good from the outstanding. Still, X-COM *Interceptor* is an entertaining ride, with good graphics, solid gameplay, intuitive control and an engaging storyline.



Pilots can customize their ships by dragging and dropping lasers and missiles onto hard points in the load out screen.



Players still have some of the resource management and researching tasks familiar from previous X-COM games.



One of the gameplay features that is held over from earlier X-COM games is hiring your pilots.

Coming across new alien ships in *Interceptor* is half the fun, as each one has a look unique to the game.

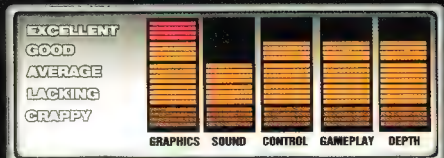


BUY IT!

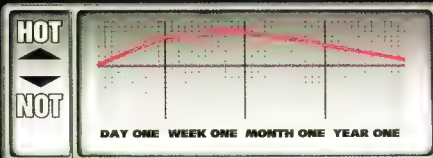


Fans of the X-COM series may be disappointed by the direction *Interceptor* has taken, but the dog fights are still intense and the game is a good extension of the X-COM universe.

EQUALIZER



PREDICTED INTEREST GRAPH



INCOMING

Sega's Dreamcast Does E3

With a brilliant showing at E3 in Atlanta, Sega's latest system stunned the crowds and garnered amazing support. Last month we gave you the breaking news on Dreamcast — this month, we've nailed it down, along with an interview with SOA's main man, Bernie Stolar, in which he actually says that an upcoming Dreamcast game will 'rock the gaming world.' How bizarre is that? Read on:

Launch plans Modem talk

On November 20th, when Dreamcast launches in Japan, the machine will have a built-in 33.6 Kbps

Modem, the fastest speed that conventional telephone lines can deal with, in terms of data. Online and network gaming is just starting to take off in Japan. The Internet

has had a slow start there, but Japanese gaming pundits predict that online gaming is the future — something the US has been well aware of for some time.

Although 33.6 Kbps may sound primitive, the Modem is modular and could theoretically be replaced with a faster unit as simply as inserting a cartridge. The plan is to ensure that the unit can be upgraded to whatever new technology comes along, like X2, cable modem, anything.

In the US, the Modem applications will be handled initially by Sega Soft and HEAT.net — with connectivity being centered around a community and more importantly, around games. It'll be possible to read email, browse

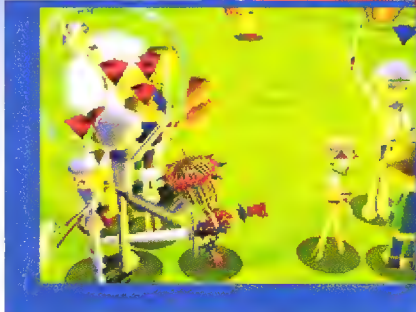
the Net — Sega has already mentioned that a keyboard and mouse are logical add-ons. The Modem turns Dreamcast into a totally new phenomenon, a true plug 'n' play Internet gaming device. If Sega can present a clean interface to the web, then it'll coast into difficult waters with no problems. This connectivity is also mirrored in the PDA device, which you can read about elsewhere in this feature

Controller talk

The importance of a good controller cannot be underestimated. In fact, Sony has just announced that the Dual Shock analog pad will now be the standard bundle for PlayStation. Nintendo's controller set the standard — analog is essential. Sega's pad surprisingly only features one analog stick, and no 'rumble' feature, but it does have two slots, similar to those on the Nintendo unit. One will be consistently filled with Sega's PDA device, and the other? Sega hasn't announced any plans at this time, but the possibilities are limitless. Another similarity between Dreamcast and N64 is the inclusion of four joystick ports on the console.

So what are the games?

As of right now, the only officially announced titles for the Dreamcast are: Sega's *Sonic '3D'* title, Capcom's *Resident Evil 4*,





Bizarre Creation's tentatively named **Metropolis** (a racer), a yet unnamed rail shooter rumored to be developed by Argonaut (**Croc**, **Starfox**) and published by Sega, Warp's **D2** and loads of Sega's own inhouse titles, guaranteed at both Japan and US launches. And in a surprise mention at the E3 Dreamcast press conference, Bernie Stolar claims that RPGs are now very important to the future of the system. Not too shabby, but with Acclaim, Midway, GT Interactive, Interplay and Micropose on the confirmed list of Dreamcast publishers, expect some big name franchises to be emerging for the system, as well. Other than the publishers named above, there were also numerous other companies who told us, off the record, that they had future plans for their games to appear on Sega's system. We'll make sure to inform you when they go official on their plans.

So what's with the name?

The only real criticism leveled at Dreamcast so far has been regarding the name and the logo. Both the industry and Game Buyer readers have been quick to launch attacks on Sega's early marketing of the device. But what's in a name? Some of the coolest names for consoles have bombed (Jaguar, Vectrex and Saturn) while some of the lamest (PlayStation, 2600, Nintendo) have gone on to great success.

A name is simply a word you associate with a thing - and if that thing is a fantastic console, then Dreamcast should establish itself as a great brand in no time at all. Even the logo, simplistic as it is, is immediately branded onto the memory. Like it or not, you already recognize the Dreamcast logo.

Sega's marketing points toward the name as an exercise in branding. It is designed to appease the powers at Yamaha, Hitachi and NEC and to appeal to players in every country.

Bernie Stolar: The Sega Messiah?

Bernie Stolar is the man who will be responsible for getting a Dreamcast under your TV by Christmas 1999. Why? Because he's the head honcho at Sega Of America and has been given a good portion of the 500 million bucks earmarked for the Dreamcast launch campaign. Our reporter talked directly to the man with the plan.

GB: Why will Dreamcast succeed where Saturn failed?

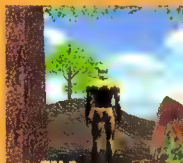
BS: First, let me be clear that we are fully cognizant of the many factors that contributed to the Saturn business performance. We have examined every detail of what a successful platform requires and are determined to make sure each area is covered. For instance, the development kits are out to developers now, the documentation is in English (something we didn't do at the beginning of Saturn development). In the US, we're launching in the fall of '99 so that we have the time to make sure that the software is there and it's the best thing anyone has ever seen or played. The price will be right and the market timing will be right.

GB: Tell us about the games at launch time in the US.

BS: We'll have them. We'll have about 10 -12 right at launch and 30 - 35 by Jan. 1, 2000 between us and other publishers. While I can't tell you specifics now (it's far too early), I will say that we won't be repeating the past by not having our marquis games at launch.

GB: What's the biggest mistake Sega made in the 32 bit console race?

BS: I really think it was a combination of things. Bad timing, high price, launch software that didn't sell the hardware, no Sonic at launch, limited retail distribution and 32X didn't help our position at retail, with the consumer or with the developer/publisher community. I don't think any one thing



Fox Interactive E3 Times X

Croc II

SYSTEM: PlayStation, PC
RELEASE DATE: December

Shown at E3 going to the moon in videotape footage, the biggest bite in the Fox lineup was a sequel to one of last year's more worthy mascot entries. *Croc*. According to Fox, the game's designers, Argonaut, listened to input concerning the slow openings found in the first game and thus attempted to incorporate bigger levels, larger worlds, and more variety in gameplay. What issue, for result, is the inclusion of a better amount of add games and plenty of diversions from the standard linear platform direction. Expect the little green ape to be taking leaping in a diverse series of bigger, more open stages that will have him swimming through water, running on thin 3d slopes and riding hot air balloons or rats against his enemies.

Croc himself will be taking a lot of new moves and attacks to make up the action. The ability to grab objects and throw them adds plenty, not only to enemy interaction but perhaps may lack on a puzzle solving dimension to the otherwise platformish game. The producers are also following the lead taken by games like *Blasto* in that *Croc II* is aiming to stream off of the disc during transitions between levels. The usage of the technique, deftly sidestepping the usual blank-screened times encountered in most 3D-Rom games. Does this mean that *Croc II* will take place in a massive, more overhead type of environment, like *Blasto*? We'll have to wait and see when we get a playable version in to answer that question.

Argonaut has also left more detail to enemies and allies within the game. It took a detailed family of the apes has taken on a more distinct look, each sporting unique outfits and ones to accommodate its throw in the game. Based on the fact that they are found in the desert level, you'll find that the diabolical will be wearing piratish-type garb. The game is slated just for a 2.5 million release.

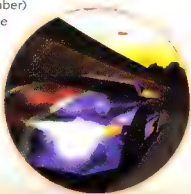
Best of the Rest

Among Fox's upcoming lineup, their action games really shine brightest, with the first person shooter *Aliens Vs.*

Predator (4th Qtr.) and the action/adventure shootout from Argonaut, *Alien Resurrection* (September), topping the list. A surprise racing title, *Motorhead* (4th Qtr.), looked absolutely gorgeous at 50 frames per second on a high res PC screen, but we'll have to wait and see if the smooth visuals will translate over to the PlayStation. The game will be compatible with the analog controller for the Sony console, as well.

A lengthy sports lineup is also in the works at Fox with a fully licensed college basketball title for the N64 on the cards called *College Hoops* (November) that features all 112 teams as well as the standard N64 multiplayer capabilities.

Fox Sports Tennis and Fox Sports Hockey '99 are both multi-platform (PlayStation, PC) titles slated for release in September. While the tennis game features real Fox Sports commentators, *Hockey '99* is fully licensed and loaded for internet play.



Star-Gazing

On the last day of the show, Fox performed the ultimate feat to fuel the already high flame of fanboy enthusiasm by featuring an exclusive appearance by Gillian Anderson, the actress who plays Special Agent Dana Scully on the *X-Files*, at its E3 booth. With her arrival scheduled from noon to two, by 10 a.m. the line of eager hopefuls seeking an autograph nearly stretched the entire length of the convention hall. Anderson appeared to promote the release of the PC title, *X-Files: The Game*, which features her and the rest of the television show's cast in a graphic adventure of point-and-click proportions.



CONFIDENTIAL

Upper management said
we'd all get canned
if we told you about our
**screaming new high-resolution
2D/3D graphics card.**

But they didn't say we
couldn't give you a hint.



www.soundblaster.com/hotgraphics/

[Hey, how did that get there?]

CREATIVE

WWW.SOUNDBLASTER.COM

Squaresoft

Gameplay Heaven Ahead



Squaresoft's headstrong commitment to anime and Japanese RPGs, announced this February, drove its E3 "theatre" over the three-day show. Once you got past the line, you were treated to a big-screen showing of the Final Fantasy VII over, along with video collages of the upcoming lineup, showing off some of the most impressive CG-rendered cinematics the side of Mamco. But aside from the rhapsody of fanboyish enthusiasm for RPGs, Squaresoft kept the crowd just happy with playable versions of all of its upcoming games, including *Brave Fencer Mushashi*, *Parasite Eve*, *Xenogears*, and *Bushido Blade 2*. Not to mention a light showing of Square games on the way, the full of '98 is slated to be one of the busiest and most exciting for role-playing fans.

Xenogears leads the pack for console RPGs, having been taken to the States. Before its release in Japan, executive producer Yoshinori Kusanagi announced that the game would not be seeing the light of day in the United States because of the game's religious overtones. The decision was reversed, however, because the game was available in Japan, enough to the depths of US role-playing fans and gamers quickly generated as to who might publish the title. Since Square and EA merged, the word was on the street and now, the RPG that at once melds high technology and deep narrative will be on US shelves, thanks to the interactive battles.

With much fighting, sharp and and the most rendered anime-style, *Xenogears* should be at the top of every list for the holidays.

Brave Fencer Mushashi

(November) will not only be a game with a second and featuring a 3D interactive demo, but will also play a different side of Square. The game's clearly Square's first foray into a 3D personal action RPG, playing the gambit in the role of a sword-wielding hero.

With voice-overs and multi-link gameplay, a new Square mascot may just be born with the release of *Brave Fencer*. Another hit favorite, *Bushido Blade 2*, releases the concept and gameplay of the online hit with sword and flame characters, weapons, and combos.

For realistic gameplay, that made for the best swordplay, we'll step forward for the game's release, more.

Brave Fencer Mushashi

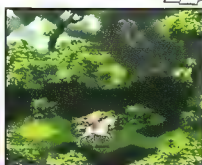
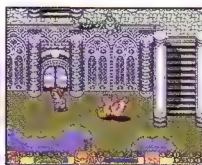


Side Notes 'Squared'

Square recently announced to the Japanese press that they will be on the list of developers and publishers that will wholeheartedly support Sony's latest PlayStation related gadget, the Sony PDA, when it launches there this Christmas. This news confirms the possibility of using the PDA to "level up" characters from console RPGs in a remote fashion.

Earlier this year in March, a Japanese newspaper had run stories that Square was working on a few new titles for the year. The four titles kicking around Japanese headlines at this point are *Last Saga* (next in the *Romancing SaGa* series), *Seiken Densetsu 4* (*Secret of Mana 4*), the first three *Final Fantasy* games, as well as the third *Front Mission* installment. While this news is several months old, it's interesting to see how the best laid plans can sometimes either pan out or go the way of Beta. We've still got roughly four more months of the year to find out which.

It's true... Electronic Arts Square, KK has signed up to release *Sim Copter 64* on the N64 in Japan per their joint venture. Does this mean that Square will be developing games for their old pals, Nintendo? Don't count on it anytime soon.



Hear What Your Eyes Can't See.



Experience DirectSound3D games as the developers intended — from in front and behind.

The first complete surround sound system for the PC combines Sound Blaster® PCI128 and Cambridge SoundWorks® PCWorks™ FourPointSurround™ speakers at a

breakthrough price. This revolutionary solution offers four channel audio output, utilizing Sound Blaster® PCI technology, and four speakers with powered subwoofer based on the critically acclaimed Cambridge SoundWorks® PCWorks™. Don't be fooled by 3D audio simulations over two speakers. Maximize your gaming experience with Creative's true 3D audio solution.

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CREATIVE

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HARDCORE HARDWARE

Hardcore Hardware delivers the goods for players looking to get the most out of their gaming experience. This month we're covering everything from a new low priced gaming machine to the easiest way to complete the latest Game Boy Pocket games. We're also letting you know which peripherals are crap, and which ones you've just gotta have!

Pionex 826010

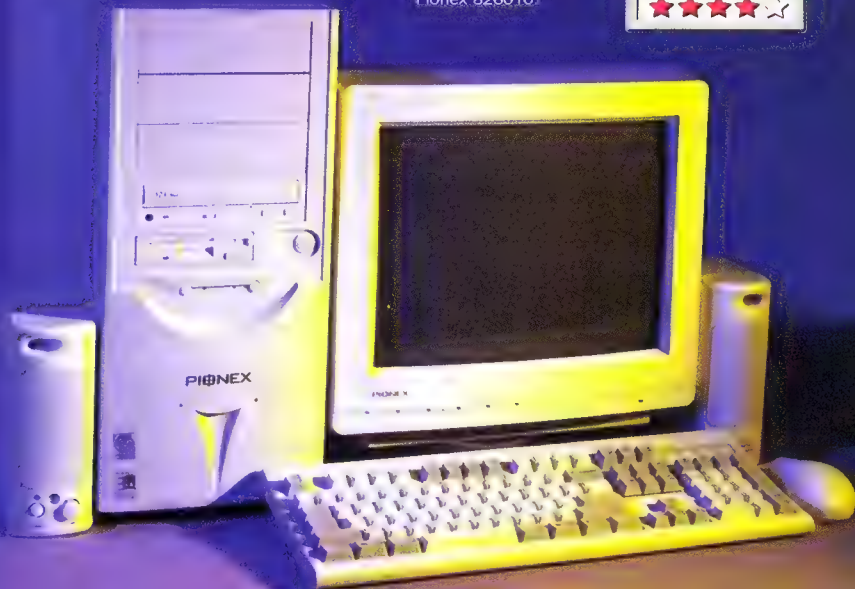
PRODUCT: Pionex 826010 **COMPANY:** Pionex
SYSTEM: PC **PRICE:** \$1199.95 www.pionex.com

The 826010 is Pionex's latest entry into the low end PC market, featuring Intel's recently introduced Celeron processor. Based on Pentium II technology, the Celeron is designed to replace the aging Pentium processor in lower priced machines. While the Celeron doesn't perform as well as Pentium II processors in applications like Excel, it does perform surprisingly well in most games, making for an excellent, lower cost alternative to Pentium II systems. In **Quake** tests, the 266MHz 826010 reached software-only framerates as high as 23 FPS, compared to

only 26 to 28 FPS for a 266 MHz Pentium II.

The 826010 is a no frills base system that can be used to build a dream machine for a reasonable price. It comes with a 266MHz MMX processor, 32MB of RAM, 6.4 GB drive, 32x CD-ROM, soundcard, speakers, and K56flex modem. While it's a good start for a gaming system, it could be upgraded with a Voodoo 2 card and a three unit speaker system for maximum performance. Buyers looking for a low end gaming machine with plenty of horsepower and a good shelf life will do well with the Pionex 826010.

BUY IT!



PowerCube Plus

PRODUCT: PowerCube Plus
COMPANY: Altec Lansing
SYSTEM: PC
PRICE: \$150
www.altecmedia.com

No gaming experience is complete without a good sound system, and one of the best speaker sets you can buy for gaming is the PowerCube Plus from Altec Lansing. The PowerCube Plus is a powerful three speaker set, with a 40 watt, six inch subwoofer for deep, rich bass tones and two 20 watt per channel satellites with a three inch mid range and 1.4 inch tweeter each.

The PowerCube Plus has superb frequency response, covering a 30 Hz to 20 kHz range, nearly the whole range of human hearing. The one feature that puts the PowerCube Plus above most other speakers is two inputs, so owners can use the speakers for both their PC, and a second device. The only flaw is the PowerCube Plus' volume control, which is set by two buttons, so there's no easy 10 determine just how loud the volume is by looking at it. Still, the PowerCube Plus is definitely a Gotta Have It speaker system for serious gaming enjoyment.

GOTTA HAVE IT!



GameShark for the Game Boy

InterAct's venerable GameShark for the Game Boy and Game Boy Pocket has recently been updated with new codes for all the latest Game Boy titles. The GameShark allows players to enter codes for cheats like unlimited ammo, invulnerability, and level select. The GameShark software is easy to use. Either select a cheat from a list of preset codes, or enter new codes that players can get from the GameShark web site, www.gameshark.com, and many gaming magazines. For players who can't quite get past the boss or want to make sure they don't miss any of the secrets, the GameShark is a good investment.



PRODUCT: GameShark
COMPANY: InterAct
SYSTEM: Game Boy
PRICE: \$29.95
www.interact-acc.com

Cheatin' with GameSharks

InterAct has rereleased their GameShark product for the Nintendo 64, PlayStation, and Saturn systems as well as the Game Boy. Game players interested in skipping levels, infinite ammo, and accessing hidden characters can do it the easy way by plugging one of these peripherals into their console. The GameShark software is easy to use and can be updated with new codes as more games are released.

Maxi Gamer 3D2 8MB

PRODUCT: Maxi Gamer
COMPANY: Guillemot
SYSTEM: PC
PRICE: \$229.95
www.guillemot.com

The kind of Voodoo 2 board accelerator companies choose when Guillemot's Maxi Gamer 3D2 board comes with 8MB and 8MB of RAM. Voodoo is an excellent card to use with a demo version of Redline Race, Planet R, Sub Outlaws and Plane Crazy. The card is also a good choice for playing games on the PC. It's a good choice for playing the Maxi Gamer 3D2 board.

BUY IT!



Hercules Terminator 2x/i

PRODUCT: Hercules Terminator 2x/i
COMPANY: Hercules
SYSTEM: PC
PRICE: \$99
www.hercules.com

The Hercules Terminator 2x/i is the latest in the 1740 3D technology developed by Real3D and Intel. The board comes with 8MB of RAM for real-time rendering, 100% DirectX, and a DVP. It's a good choice for playing games on the PC. It's a good choice for playing the Hercules Terminator 2x/i board.

THINK ABOUT IT!



Righteous 3D II 12MB

PRODUCT: Righteous 3D II 12MB
COMPANY: Onix Microsystems
SYSTEM: PC
PRICE: \$299.95
www.onix.com

At \$299, the Righteous 3D II is competitive with a competitively priced Voodoo 2 board, including in the box copies of BattleZone, Demolition, G-Police, and a demo of Jedi Knight. The drivers are very stable and the well-designed displays property tab makes set-up a snap. Quake II frame-rates are in the high 50s on PII 300 MHz machines. Gamers looking for a Voodoo 2 card won't go wrong with the Righteous 3D II 12MB board.

BUY IT!



TremorPak Plus

PRODUCT: TremorPak Plus **COMPANY:** InterAct
SYSTEM: N64 **PRICE:** \$14.95 www.interact-acc.com

Gamers who like to play *GoldenEye* and *Super Mario 64* on Nintendo for making them swap the rumble pak and memory pak to load or save a game. But there is a remedy. InterAct's TremorPak Plus is a rumble pak with a pass-through slot for memory pak, and four levels of rumble. Since you can plug a memory pak directly into the TremorPak, just slide a switch to load or save. The TremorPak Plus also includes a third memory pak. InterAct could have called this the "TremorPak Plus."

by peripherals at one very low price.

GOTTA HAVE IT!



ASCII Selector

PRODUCT: ASCII Selector **COMPANY:** ASCII
SYSTEM: ANY **PRICE:** \$42.95 www.ascient.com

The ASCII Selector allows gamers to use up to six different consoles on one TV by providing push button access to each video source. The feature that sets the ASCII Selector apart from other switch boxes is its combination of S-Video and RCA inputs and outputs. The S-Video connectors allow owners of high end TVs to run multiple S-Video devices and RCA video units through one box at the same time. Unfortunately, the ASCII Selector is only available online at the ASCII Store, www.ascient.com.

BUY IT!



Alpha 64

The Alpha 64 has the expected turbo and slow motion buttons, a good digital pad and a nice layout for the camera and A and B buttons. Unlike other N64 pads, the Alpha 64 uses a PlayStation inspired two handle, double analog design. You can't actually play games with both sticks, though. The Alpha's gimmick is that you can switch between a left and right analog stick. While the double analogs aren't terribly useful, the Alpha 64 is otherwise well designed, and a nice alternative.

PRODUCT: Alpha 64
COMPANY: Nyko
SYSTEM: Nintendo 64
PRICE: \$29.95
www.nyko.com

THINK ABOUT IT!



Namco Does a Little Genre Hopping

With the recent release of *Tekken 3* sitting pretty at the top of the gaming charts, Namco's biggest cat was already let out of the bag by the time E3 rolled around. But this doesn't mean that it didn't have a few titles to unveil at the show. Early versions of *PacMan 3D* (February '99) were in full display at the company's booth, showing off the classic hero's ability to run, jump, swim and gobble his way around a multitude of different backdrops,

including a pirate ship and a ghost town. *PacMan 3D* promises to incorporate a lot of the features found in the classic arcade stand-up with the technology and platformer qualities of today. If it's anything close to *Klonoa*, it shouldn't disappoint.

The other new title showing at the booth was the RPG, *Tales of Destiny* (September). In Japan, the game was one of the most anticipated in its genre when it released at the end of '97. Gameplay in *ToD* mimics many of the classic 16-bit titles of yesteryear, but adds enough visual detail, incredible anime cinematics and an innova-

tive battle system to create a worthy contribution to the growing RPG library on the PS. The game revolves around the legends of a race of sentient weapons called Swordians. In a world threatened by war, a group of warriors and magicians take up the challenge to use the swords to restore peace.

Tales of Destiny's combat system is the game's most innovative feature by placing your character in a pseudo-real time 2D, side-scrolling battle wherein you can use supermoves and various other attacks. "Supermoves" are discovered and unlocked as items, while enemy encounters also resemble the kind found in *Saga Frontier* in that enemies are visible onscreen



RAT ATTACK

PUBLISHER: Mindscape
RELEASE DATE: November

Paying homage to the more simplified gameplay found in the arcade, Mindscape is in the process of creating *Rat Attack*. A hard-to-categorize action-puzzle title, *Rat Attack* plunges the player into the game as a cat who must prevent a huge influx of rats from destroying the immediate vicinity of each level. Sorta like a hyper-Lemmings title, in order to trap the rats, you must contain them in small group within a maneuverable square, then dash over to a release pad to send them back into the atmosphere.

Both the PlayStation version and the N64 port will support multiplayer capabilities, while packing in a massive number of levels. Running in high resolution, the game's distinct look and the promise of diverse abilities depending upon which cat you play as help *Rat Attack* shape up to be one whacked out party game.



Capcom Surprises

Capcom's agreement to publish and distribute the long awaited, much delayed *Robotech: Crystal Dreams* for the N64 in collaboration with Game Tek was among the more surprising notes of interest that we mentioned last issue, but the biggest announcement was of its plans to produce *Resident Evil 4* for the Dreamcast. Where's RE 3, you ask? Still under development, but with the enthusiasm for Sega's new system, buzz around the show, Capcom made sure to leave its mark. No release date or game info has been announced yet.



RED JACK

REVENGE OF THE BRETHREN

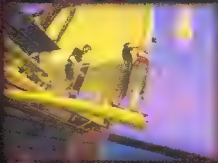
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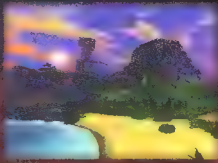
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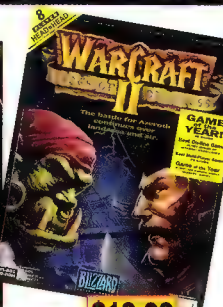
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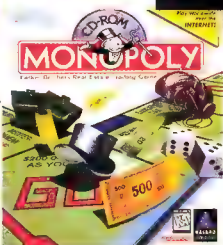
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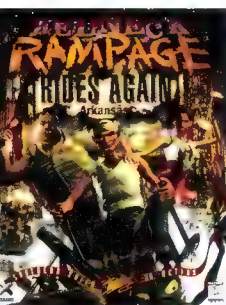
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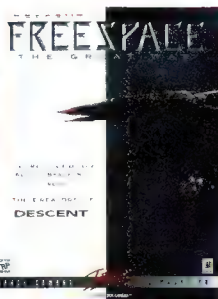
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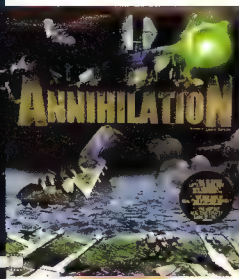
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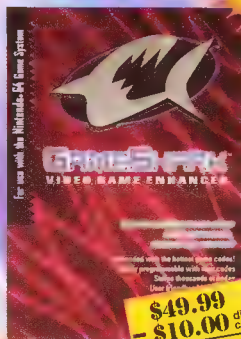
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Natsume

Casts its Lineup

One of the most interesting things about the show came from Natsume's marketing strategy for its most diverse titles. Its sights are worldwide, and the Nintendo Game Boy Advance title *Blue Dragon* is a true worldwide game, and was the first PlayStation 2 title to be released in the U.S. (The Japanese version of the game is called *Blue Dragon*). The show was also the first to feature the game *Blue Dragon* in the *Blue Dragon* section of the show.

The game's popularity in the Japanese market was a surprise, and they explored it in the show. The game was the first to be released in the U.S. (The Japanese version of the game is called *Blue Dragon*).

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Lufia III Ruins Chasers

The game's popularity in the Japanese market was a surprise, and they explored it in the show. The game was the first to be released in the U.S. (The Japanese version of the game is called *Blue Dragon*).

TECMO SHOWS

ITS DARK SIDE

Much like the original title, *Deception II*'s gameplay relies heavily on puzzle-like elements focused on trapping your enemies. But Tecmo has made several changes to the game that are distinctly noticeable off the bat.

Unlike the first person perspective of the original, *Deception II* is played in third person as the female human, Milenia, who has come under the possession of a race of immortal demons known as the 'toki-bito.' She is instructed to protect her domain (a castle) by setting a series of different traps to kill invading humans. These traps are triggered by pressing a certain symbol button on the controller and your mission objectives usually consist of constructing a trap-laden room, then luring intruders into them.

Elaborate death sequences, replete with melodramatic text, will follow a successful mission. Expect *Deception II* to release this winter.



THQ

Viva Variety

Mainly known for its multiplatform WCW games, THQ has been branching out into different territories of late with a couple of RPGs (*Quest 64*, *Granstream Saga*) and a few other non-WCW titles (*Vs.*, *Ghost in the Shell*). With only a limited time to continue exploiting its WCW license before handing it off to EA, the company has managed to solidify a diverse, engaging lineup for the remainder of the year.

The PlayStation side of the draw has quite

its share of variety, with a four-player fighting brawler *Shao-Lin*, (November) replete with Story Mode and the opportunity to choose from different characters wielding various forms of martial arts.

The PC and PlayStation share a two titles with upcoming releases: *Dead Unity* (October) and *International Rally Championship* (September). A 3D action adventure in the vein of *Resident Evil*, *Dead Unity* pits you against a futuristic environment armed with an array of deadly weapons. *International Rally Championship*, on the otherhand, is a racing title aimed squarely at fans, but goes one further by

including a track editor that allows you to create your own course. Over 60 courses and customizable vehicles make this an interesting title.

But THQ has also kept the N64 in mind with the novelty racing game, *Penny Racers* (October). Compete in any of 14 different cars, modeled after the toy line of the same name, across nine tracks. *PRacers* also includes a course editor mode similar to *IRC*. THQ has also signed on to publish two upcoming EA titles for the N64, *Soviet Strike* and *Road Rash* (both Spring

'99). THQ's license to publish games based on the *Rugrats* television cartoon will spawn PlayStation, N64 and GameBoy games that begin emerging in the fall. The PC exclusive *Speed Tribes* (Fall), a combat hovercraft game much like *Forsaken* without the corridors, should go nicely with multiplayer capabilities via the Internet.

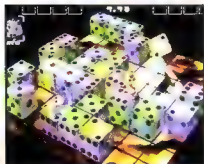
Big in Japan

In addition to the variety of games mentioned above, THQ is also working on bringing over more Japanese titles for domestic release. The trend really started with *Ghost in the Shell*, but the company is furthering its intentions with the upcoming 2D sidescrolling shooter, *G. Darius*, and the achingly cute puzzle game, *Devil Dice*. *G. Darius* follows much in the same stead as Square's phenomenal *Einhander* and Working Designs' upcoming *Thunderforce V* in that it plays mainly like a traditional

sidescrolling shooter. The biggest innovation in the game is the ability for you to choose from different branches at set points throughout each level.

Devil Dice (featuring the cutest character of '98) plays like a maniac's dominos, but with a board full of dice that you must manipulate in order to match them up and clear the board. With

a zillion modes, including a battle mode for up to four players (with multitap), *Devil Dice* has a shot at being quite the party game. Both games release in September for the PlayStation.



WCW Ahead!

THQ's license with the WCW ain't quite over yet and it's planning a few new wrestling titles to be released before the year is up. The collection of new and slightly new titles include:

WCW/NWO Revenge (September) and **WCW Nitro** (Winter '99) for the N64, while the PlayStation will be receiving **WCW/NWO Live** probably this December. **WCW Nitro** will also be appearing on the PC, giving computer gamers a chance to try their hand at one of the most popular genres in videogaming.



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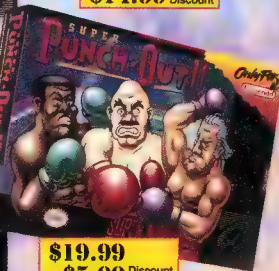
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The Best of E3 Hardware

NVIDIA RIVA TNT

NVIDIA's RIVA TNT 3D accelerator card was one of the most anticipated products shown at E3. The TNT chipset is a combination 2D/3D accelerator that supports resolutions as high as 1600x1200 in 32-bit color, the largest resolution supported by any single 3D card. The TNT processes two pixels per clock cycle, enabling single-pass multi-texturing, and a 250 million pixel per-second fill rate. NVIDIA recently announced that the 3D Velocity 4400 would be the first TNT-based card brought to market, with GeForce and RIVA competing TNT-based accelerators to back.

Hercules Thriller CONSPIRACY

The Thriller CONSPIRACY card is the first mainstream 3D graphics card that accelerates the entire 3D pipeline in hardware, including geometry and lighting effects. Based on the Rendition V2200 3D accelerator board and Fujitsu's 3D geometry processor, the combination takes the geometry set-up and lighting efforts in a 3D game off of the CPU, yielding significantly higher frame rates on lower-end machines. The real world result is that your old PC performs some athletic stunts.

Featured 3D games are \$100 less than games for only \$149.

Microsoft Digital Sound System 80

Microsoft's PC speakers will be the first to support DirectSound3D protocols without a 3D audio card. They are also the only speakers for the Philips Electronics W663C subwoofer technology. The two satellite, 20-watt speakers and the 100-watt subwoofer setup has an excellent dynamic range with software equalizer presets for most musical genres. The speakers will retail for \$250.

LINER NOTES

► Bill Stealey's game company, Interactive Magic, has filed for an initial public offering. The company, which concentrates on military simulations, wargames and strategy titles, expects to offer 2.8 million shares to the general public.

► Activision has helped two former developers at its internal studio set up a new independent studio, Pandemic Studios. Headed by veteran designers Josh Resnick and Andrew Goldman, the first two games from the company will be sequels to **Battlezone** and **Dark Reign**.

► Interplay is now seeking licensees for the **Messiah** engine, a 3D technology developed by Michael Persson of Shiny Entertainment.

► Joystick maker ThrustMaster has laid off 30% of its staff, following disappointing financial results. The company attributed its difficulties to declining demand for new PC peripherals.



Matrox Mystique G200

Another impressive video board on display was the Matrox Mystique G200, a combination 2D/3D AGP video accelerator. The G200 provides exceptional 3D performance, with support for 1920 x 1200 resolutions in 16-bit color and 3D resolutions as high as 1600 x 1200 in 16-bit color without Z-buffering, or 1024 x 864 in 32-bit color. The G200 also offers good expandability, with support for hardware add-on boards that provide MPEG-2 playback for DVD and video input. A price tag of \$169 for BMB and \$49 for the BAMB upgrade is pretty affordable.

SGRL Titans Sphere

Second Generation Research Laboratories demonstrated their alternative controller, the Titans Sphere. While no substitute for the keyboard and mouse in first-person shooters, the sphere provides impressive maneuverability in environments with control of all three axes.



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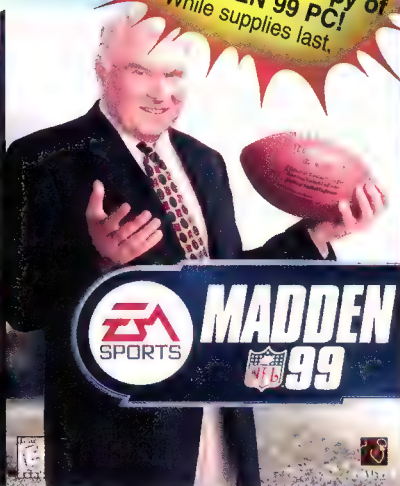


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News Bytes

Ogre Battle 3

The Japanese developer Quest has unveiled details on its latest installment in the *Ogre Battle* series for Nintendo 64. Tentatively called *Ogre Battle 3*, the graphically impressive real-time strategy RPG puts gamers in control of a medieval army, out to liberate the oppressed working class. The more than 100 characters in the game include knights, magicians, wyverns and dragon tamers. *Ogre Battle* is slated for a late '98 release in Japan — a US release is almost guaranteed.

Utopia Joins N64 Developers

Utopia Technologies & Associates announced to jump on the Nintendo 64 wagon. The company officially announced that it has secured the rights to develop games for Nintendo 64, the first of which will be a third-person action title designed to take advantage of Nintendo's Super Rumble motion controller. Utopia's first game is scheduled for release in late 1998.

Zelda Sequel

Nintendo is upping its development output by creating several games with the same engine. Master creator Shigeru Miyamoto commented, "Once *Zelda 64* is finished, we will split in two. One team will work on a semi-sequel while the other team will be working on a completely new game using the *Zelda* engine." The move comes in response to many critics' complaints that the Japanese company's development of Super Nintendo games is almost exclusively for the Japanese market.

Bernie Stolar: The Sega Messiah?

continued From page 59

was the issue, it was the layering effect that these things had on the business. Remember, no launch has ever been perfect for anyone. You can hide a lot of mistakes by overcompensating in different areas.

GB: If you could choose any third party game to be ready for launch with the Dreamcast system, what would it be, and why?

BS: I can't tell you that. Let's just say that I've been talking to all the third parties about how we can work with them, not just at launch, but throughout the product lifecycle and I think you'll see a different strategy with Dreamcast than Sega has had in the past. It's clear that Sega, even with our stable of the best developers in the world, can't make all the software we'll need to drive the Dreamcast business.

GB: Paint us a rough picture of Sega's Dreamcast Internet strategy.

BS: For Dreamcast in the US, we think the key to the Internet strategy is gaming online, multiplayer, console gaming. And I mean multiplayer in all senses of the word; point-to-point, lobby-driven, massive multiplayer in non-persistent and persistent worlds. With Dreamcast, we think we'll be able to get a whole new player gaming online since we remove the technical, configuration nightmare barriers to online play that the PC world has. Chat is key to the experience. Less important for us is browsing, but we'll definitely be there with a really strong browser for TV viewing.

GB: Do you think the lack of backward compatibility is a problem?

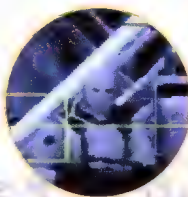
BS: No.

GB: The PDA, it's really built for the Japanese, isn't it?

continued on page 84

SOLID METAL GEAR

Konami is preparing a very limited collector's edition of *Metal Gear Solid* for the game's fall release. The set will contain a t-shirt, the soundtrack, cheesy dog tags (please don't wear them while playing), and metallic memory card stickers. And above all that special gear, Konami is to include a disc that contains peeks at both *Silent Hill* and *Suikoden III*. Don't Japanese gamers just get all the coolest swag? We'll be camped out on our local import shop's doorstep as soon as we hear a confirmed release date for the collector's edition and the entire package price.



ASCII

Clock Tower II:
The Struggle Within

SYSTEM: PlayStation

RELEASE DATE: 4th Qtr. '98

ASCII's featured featured another second installation in the ultra-creepy Clock Tower series should have jump fans excited for its release at the end of the year. As a point-and-click endeavor, the original title was surprisingly successful at creating a feeling of suspense. The second title in the series remains steeped in the same terror-filled atmosphere, but shifts the storyline to the adventures of a young girl named Yutaka.

Yutaka lives a typical teenage life in that she doesn't wear a uniform, trusts nobody, and has the uncanny ability to shift personalities. The alter ego possesses different abilities than Yutaka in that she is able to attack enemies with weapons, while Yutaka can include enemies by disappearing. An interesting mix of attributes that directly affects the events that take place during the game as well as the ending you receive (there are 13 endings in all). When playing, you'll be required to use

both personalities to endless progress through different areas, but it will be up to the gamer to decide when, where, and how to solve puzzles and control Yutaka's powers.

CT II is also compatible with Sony's DualShock controller as well as the PlayStation mouse, which adds indefinitely to the nature of the game. With a bigger variety of enemies to fight past, including a spooky little ghost girl, the incorporation of the DualShock controller adds a new dimension to the gameplay. Much in the same vein as the Resident

Evil series, the game's dependence on suspense and horror is compounded by a timeline that Yutaka must beat in order to avoid being doomed to the same fate.

ARMORED CORE:
PROJECT PHANTASMA

SYSTEM: PlayStation

RELEASE DATE: 4th Qtr. '98

In a surprise announcement a few months ago, ASCII confirmed its intentions on bringing over the quasi-sequel to Sony's '97 title, *Armored Core: Project Phantasma*. Packing in 17 new missions, along with a whole set of new objectives and a deathmatch mode, AC: PP's other highly innovative feature is the ability to transfer mechs and credits from previous original

Armored Core saves to this latest installation of the game. The

game literally picks up where the last one left off. This feature is not intrinsic to the game, but it does give fans an opportunity to avoid wasting time building up mechs by allowing them to get right into the missions, but will also work as a stand alone title. Mech fanatics should rejoice when the game is released this winter.

Upcoming
Lineup

In addition to the titles mentioned above, ASCII has also expanded its lineup to include the hover-board-type title, *Airboardin' USA* (3rd Qtr.), for the N64. It's like snowboarding, but without the snow and without the slopes. Eight characters and 80 different tricks should keep gamers happy. ASCII also gave a more realistic street date for the 16-bit update of the strategy RPG, *Master of Monsters: Disciples of Gala*. In September, MoM will show off day to night battles, monster combination features, as well as multi-player capabilities.



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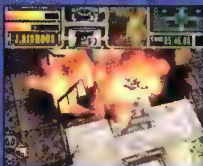
Atlus'

Big Year in '98

In its biggest showing at E3 yet, Atlus surprised everyone by picking up the rights to all the Hudsonsoft PS titles like **Bomberman World** (September), and had a few other games up its sleeve. On offer for the coming season are two strategy titles, a strategy RPG, **Brigandine**, and an action game, **Trap Gunner**.

Brigandine (Winter '98) is yet another chapter in Atlus' growing line of strategy RPGs, but goes one further. As one of the five selectable knights of the Raine, you'll be rebelling against a power-hungry emperor in strategic battles. Combat takes place on hexagonal playing fields and when a final battle is made with the opposing party, the match will take place on a separate, July-3D-rendered screen (a la **Shining Force III**). Atlus is promising over 30 hours of gameplay for each of the five characters, along with class promotions, lock-horns, and monies, and... well, the quest.

Trap Gunner (Spring '98) is a game around the actions of six secret agents who have been "brainwashed" by an evil, total organization to join for one another. What results incorporates action, strategy, and strategy. You'll play as one of the agents who must set traps, fight manually and plan to lay waste to the other agents in the game. An extensive mix of genres, **TC** also features two-player split-screen mode as well. Check for reviews of **Trap Gunner** and **Brigandine** World next week.



Bernie Stolar:

The Sega Messiah?

continued From page 81

BS: Not really. We think that the VMS (we won't call it a PDA here) will be utilized differently here than in Japan, but it has great applicability to the system regardless of territory. But I don't think you'll see people here wearing it around their necks a la tamagotchi and we won't be marketing it that way. Here we see VMS as a critical part of building the Dreamcast community. You can imagine guys downloading features, teams, players or parts of games and going to their friends house, linking them up and sharing their games. I think VMS is going to be key to the overall Dreamcast experience.

GB: What is Yu Suzuki up to, then? We know he's working on a console-only Dreamcast project. Tell us more.

BS: I'm sorry, I can't tell you now what Suzuki-san is working on. Let's just say that I've seen the project and it is going to rock the gaming world.

GB: We want Sonic. We wanted Sonic for Saturn. You never gave him to us. We're mad. Will you give us Dreamcast Sonic?

BS: We heard you before. Sonic will be there, in all his glory, at the launch.

RED STORM FINDS HOME

Tom Clancy's videogame company, Red Storm, has found a publisher in South Peak Interactive. Together, they'll be bringing home a string of PC titles including the recent **Rainbow Six** (August), a third person, mission-based military game. **Dominant Species** (October) turns the tables on traditional real-time strategies by placing you in the role of the creatures fighting against a human invasion. Clancy's **ruthless.com** (November) is another strategy title that capitalizes on strategic economic monopolies and corporate raiding. You even have the option to hire thugs to assassinate competitors.



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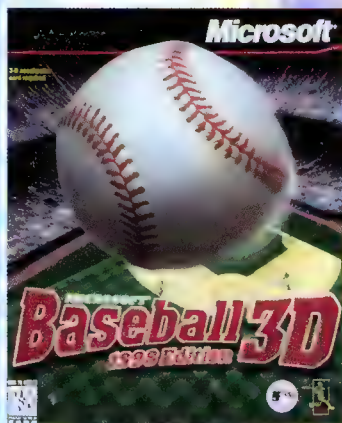
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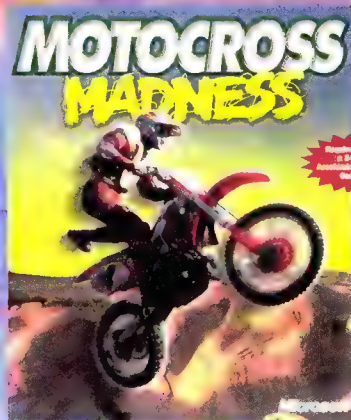
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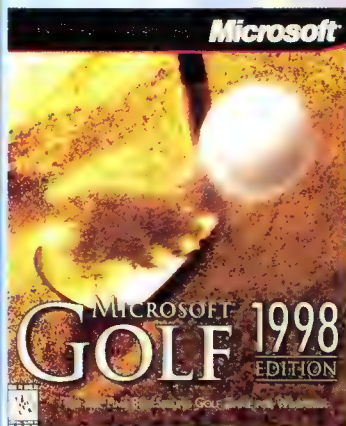
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INCOMING

Activision

a License here, a License there

Activision's E3 lineup provided a little something for everyone. The string of games included both highly anticipated PC titles, as well as those aimed squarely at the console market. An example of its console lineup is the upcoming action game, **T'ai Fu** (Fall), in which you assume the role of a 'kung-fu fighter' tiger who must clear his name of a crime he didn't commit. This is Activision's first partnering with Dreamworks and **T'ai Fu**

is the result: 20 tight-packed levels, multiple fighting moves, and lush graphics accompany the tiger's romp through ancient China.

Aside from the anticipated PS release, **Tenchu**, Activision's remaining lineup falls more on the PC side. A string of titles with various twists is evident in the company's plans for **Legend of the Five Rings** (Winter), **Third World** (Winter), and **Beneath** (Spring '99). All titles promise role-playing aspects as well as action sequences, but the big draw for the games will be multiplayer features. **Legend of the Five Rings** stays in

the same stead as the card game that takes place

in the mythical world of Rokugan and features 30 quests packed with magic and feudal Japanese themes. **Beneath** focuses on action with puzzles and other obstacles spread out over 20 levels.

The most impressive title in their PC lineup, however, goes to **Heretic II** (Fall), which wowed our own chief, Frank O'Connor. Played as a third person action game, as opposed to the first person

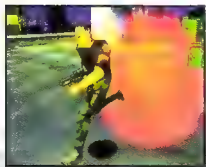
Doom clone feel of the original **Heretic**, you'll be able to wield impressive spells as well as swim, climb, etc. Using the **Quake II** engine in a third person game ensures impressive scaling and smooth animations in movement. An impressed Frank referred to the game as 'PC accelerated **Tomb Raider** on dope' and isn't that all you really need to know?

More Star Appeal

The return of **Apocalypse** surprised us all with big changes in gameplay. The game will now feature Bruce Willis as the main playable character, and not as planned with the original concept of Bruce as the wise-cracking sidekick throughout the game. As a result, new voice overs will be recorded and certain CG cinemas will have to be redone. Poe still slinks around a bit on the screen, while her songs provide the background music in the game. We'll be covering **Apocalypse** more as it nears release in November.

Activision's **Fifth Element** is coming along nicely, as well. An action/adventure game utilizing an enhanced **Nightmare Creatures** engine, gamers play as both Korben and Leeloo in order to complete missions replete with puzzles, hand to hand combat and shooting action. One big draw to the game is the inclusion of ene-

mies with a wide array of various behaviors. Closely based on the movie of the same name, **Fifth Element** is set to release in September.



Old School Trends

Activision has a tradition and the company is proud to bandwagon to provide PlayStation games with a compilation of Atari 2600 classics. Activision Classics, the collection features 30 Atari games including the legendary **Pitfall**, **River Raid**, **H.E.R.O.**, **Xhopper Command**, **Command**, **Felix**, **Boxing**, **Crackpot**, **Fishing Derby**, **Freeway**, **Frost Bites**, **Seaquest**, and more. Its all about nostalgia and Activision is offering the disc at a price of \$29.99. The collection is to be released in October.

River Raid, **H.E.R.O.**, **Xhopper Command**, **Command**, **Felix**, **Boxing**, **Crackpot**, **Fishing Derby**, **Freeway**, **Frost Bites**, **Seaquest**, and more. Its all about nostalgia and Activision is offering the disc at a price of \$29.99. The collection is to be released in October.



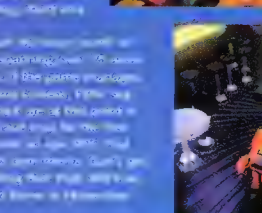
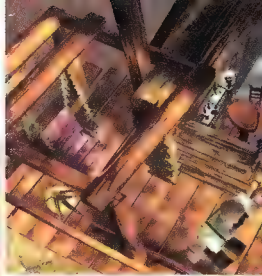
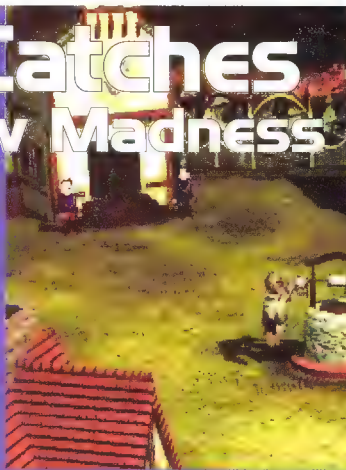
Crave Catches Shadow Madness

▼ When you're looking for a console game based on the upcoming indie space company showcase game, it's an odd thing to develop the console-ready game. Crave's game, made up of various ex-Boulder City team members, *Shadow Madness*, is a true indie effort to build a game for N64 development. The game is currently in the final stages of development, and the team is on track with console development. The game is playing well, and the team is on track with console development. The game is playing well, and the team is on track with console development.

The game is the first in a series of games that will be released. The game is the first in a series of games that will be released. The game is the first in a series of games that will be released. The game is the first in a series of games that will be released. The game is the first in a series of games that will be released.

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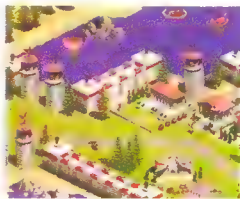


LINER NOTES

▼ Yoshiaki Okamoto, director of research and development at Capcom confirmed in a recent interview he had with IGN that *Resident Evil 3* is on the way. Capcom Japan has already started staffing up and has been placing ads in Japanese game mags to hire for 'Biohazard Next Project.' Unfortunately for anxious gamers, the game won't show up in Japan until 1999 at the earliest and may not make it to the states until the year 2000.

▼ Microsoft and Psygnosis have signed an exclusive deal in which Psygnosis will port over several of Microsoft's popular PC titles to the PlayStation. The first titles announced are: *Age Of Empires*, *Urban Assault*, and *Motocross Madness*. This is just another instance of Microsoft's dogged determination to get its fingers into the console business.

▼ Capcom Japan is releasing *Magical Tetris Challenge Featuring Mickey* as a Puzzle Fighter type N64 game with Disney characters.



Housekeeping for the Devil

▼ In *Dungeon Keeper II*, you'll assume the identity of a dungeonmaster whose job it is to prevent any valiant knights, who manage to enter your abode, from living to tell about it. To do this, you must issue commands to your hordes of lesser demons while setting complex traps to dispatch any forces of good that enter.

With a ton of cinematics, an improved first person view, a host of new spells, creatures and rooms, and a definite tongue-in-cheek humor, *DKII* is released this winter for both the PC and PS from Bullfrog/EA.



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201.159.1

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**DRAGONBALLZ #10
REBIRTH**



Psygnosis Showstopping

Colony Wars: Vengeance

SYSTEM: PlayStation
RELEASE DATE: December

While *Duke* pulled the crowds in on the forefront at E3, *Colony Wars: Vengeance* successfully kept them coming back for more. All several playable 'kiosks' at the show, the game looked faster, better, and more exciting than the original. The development team makes a massive upgrade to every single aspect of the first game's space-fight engine by twinking stuff like enemy AI, the feel of speed in space, as well as the graphics, themselves. But Psygnosis has also kept the majority of the game's original features for the sequel by retaining multiple enemies as well as fast-paced, non-linear mission packs with multiple paths, objectives and a whole lot more.

Colony Wars: Vengeance is available on PlayStation 2 and PC.

Colony Wars and more, besides the background by placing enough plot twists and character development to go the thematic distance. But, by far, the most impressive new feature within *Colony Wars: Vengeance* is the ability for the fleet to switch from air to ground combat. Depending on your mission and the specific objectives, you'll be required to land on various planets to take down enormous fighting vehicles, fighting bosses and various enemies will also test your will by forcing you to fight more intelligently in seeing out resources and attack patterns.

The game comes home solely to the PlayStation 2 this November.

Oddities and O.D.T.s

Psygnosis has a killer lineup planned for the rest of the year and into the next. Notables include the 3D action/adventure title set for October release, *O.D.T. (Or Die Trying)*, which allows the gamer to choose between four different characters to play. *Global Domination* (October) takes a simplistic visual approach to a complex concept of attempting to take over the world one country at a time, real-time strategy style. *Psybadek* should finally be rearing its racing/platform head for impending release this winter by unloading tons of cutesy characters onto hoverboard courses, but by far the weirdest title in the lineup goes to the *Spice Girls* game, which works as more of a bizarre interactive promotion of the group's live appearances and 'music' than anything else. The concept is similar to *Parappa* and *Bust-A-Groove* (formerly *Bust-A-Move* in Japan), but with dance moves set against the patented saccharine sound 'stylings' of the all-girl singing group. How will the game fare now that Geri (Ginger Spice) has split from the group? After lengthy lawsuits, it seems she'll remain part of the game, making it a collectible for Spice freaks around the world.



N64 Wipes Out

The announcement that Psygnosis was to bring the legendary futuristic racer, *Wipeout64*, to Nintendo's 64-bit system came as a blessing for owners and a bit of a shock for others. Can the game be recreated on a cartridge? Playtests at E3 revealed a loyal translation with just the slightest marring of visual quality — but it still controlled well. While the game should be a hit for the system when it releases this winter, Psygnosis is rumored to be bearing the brunt of Sony's displeasure concerning the U.K.-based company's publishing plans.



WIPEOUT64

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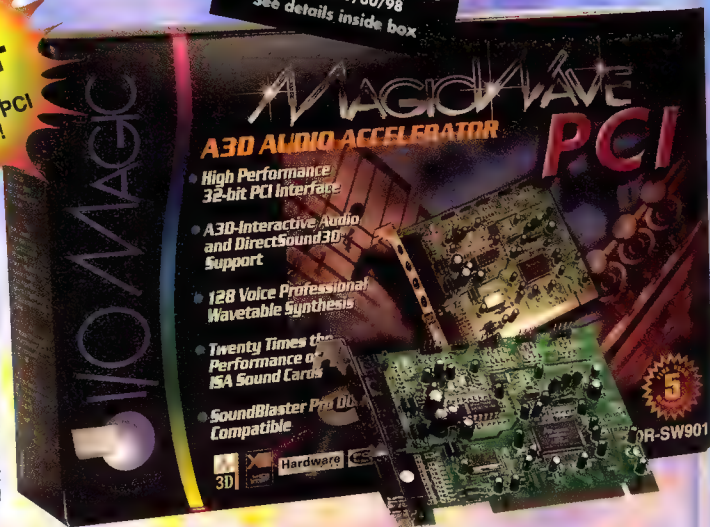
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INCOMING >>

Sony Downsizes for Spyro

Spyro the Dragon

SYSTEM: PlayStation
RELEASE DATE: December

One of the big money titles that Sony is betting to be a hit this year is the hyper-cute adventure, **Spyro the Dragon** (September). Compatible with the Dual Shock and sporting some of the tightest, most lush graphics on the PlayStation, **Spyro** features a wee dragon on a mission to save his fellow elders who have been frozen by bad guy, Gnasty Gnorc (alliteration, anyone?). You'll spend the game running, jumping and flying through 30 massive, completely 3D levels collecting multi-colored gems (hey, we didn't say it was completely original), golden dragon statues, keys and freeing your friends. Think of it as a **Crash** for the kiddy set, but with gameplay for all ages.

Unlike **Crash**, the worlds are completely open and allow for extensive exploration with small puzzle elements and the occasional bonus flying level (wherein you have a set time limit to glide around and collect goodies). In a nearly final version of the game, the camera is incredibly intelligent and the controls include a first-person perspective to examine your surroundings, as well as manual camera controls to adjust your viewpoint.

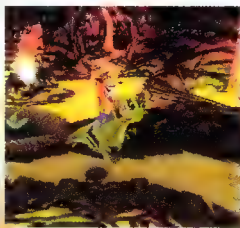
You attack your enemies by either charging into them or by breathing short range fire in order to collect items and gems. Your attacks also come in handy to do things like light cannons or obliterate certain obstacles. Thus far, the game is a favorite around the office, with hi-res graphics and addictive gameplay. Sony's hyping the game as its next big thing, and they may very well be right. But when all the hype and marketing blitz subsides, it's all about the game. Look for **Spyro** to land on shelves in September in time for the start of one of videogaming's biggest season for competition.

Crash Test

Sony's other big title, **Crash: WARPED** (November) is shaping up rather nicely with Naughty Dog working literally like dogs to bang the game out by the holidays. The company's also gone on record to announce that it's also planning to have the fourth episode of the ever growing **Crash** saga up and running by the 1999 E3 show. Now, that's dedication. We wonder if the original **Crash** might *still* be in the Top 10 when that happens.

SCEA's remaining title in its '98 lineup is **MediEvil**, a 3D sort of Ghouls and Goblins.

Action and adventure combine to make up the journey of an undead knight who must free his homeland from a psycho spell freak with a penchant for turning people into zombies. There's actual swordplay as well as puzzles to solve, all with a dark goth-type flair which might have a chance to give **Kain** a run for its money in October.



Buzz for the Buck

Sony announced that it would be packing in the long-awaited Dual Shock Analog controller with PlayStation 3 for the same price that it currently sells for (\$149). This came on the heels of a retail rumor of a price drop on the existing stock of PlayStation 3 to \$130. The rumor became reality, but neither Sony nor retailers would confirm whether the drop was planned or simply retailers looking to clear stock to make space for the new packages. Either way, gamers everywhere should benefit greatly.



DEVILISHLY ADDICTIVE

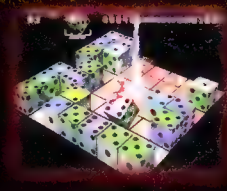
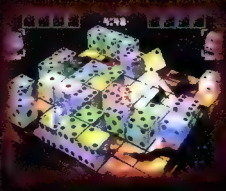


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Send your opinion to Game Buyer Say What? Or e-mail them to: bdonohue@imaginemedi.com

READER TOP TEN

Send us your Top Ten favorite games and the system they're on to Game Buyer Top Ten. Or watch for our Top Ten website, coming real soon!

Or, you could just write to:

bdonohue@imaginemedi.com

and beg for some free stuff. You never know - if there's a snowball fight going on in Hell, you could just get something free from me. You'll probably just get a nasty, but clever, letter back, though. Hey, that's kinda like a prize, isn't it?

Give 'em a hand...

Check out the word 'sinister' in the dictionary. Here's what Webster's has to say: sinister - ME: sinistre, from the Latin, on the left side.

For those of you who haven't grasped what I'm talking about yet, that big light in the sky is called the sun and yes, the Earth is round. But for the rest of you, I have a terrible confession to make: I'm left-handed...

Bill Donohue contemplates the sound of one hand clapping and is greatly dismayed by the sinister sound

Now before you start thinking, 'Geez, Bill's whacked again. Let's leave before he starts crying and singing', just bear with me a minute longer. Since most of the world is right-handed and, indeed, in some cultures, the left hand is a curse to be tolerated (in Middle Eastern countries, the left hand is used only for, uh... wiping and to hand someone something with the left hand is considered an insult), I think you all need to know what it's like to be a lefty. Those of you who are lefties will please refrain from crying during my discourse.

When you're a lefty, nothing works right and that, hopefully, will be my last unintentional

pun. Remember learning to write in school? All the little right-handed kids made those nice, curvy letters, while all us lefties could produce was a big black smear on the paper, not to mention our hands

'So what the hell does all this have to do with us gamers?', you're probably asking. Well, in case you haven't noticed, the whole gaming industry is set up to cater to the whims of the

right-handed! And lefties? Well, once again, we're passed right over. Damn!

Let's start with joysticks.

Remember when the first game systems came out? Oh, those were the heady days of equality! Joysticks were simple affairs - straight columns with a button on top that could be easily handled by people of either hand. But then, progress reared its ugly head and soon all joysticks were made more 'ergonomic', which is a polite way of saying 'Ha, ha! You're a lefty! You can't use this joystick.' And forget about playing

any flight simulators! Not only were the joysticks set up only for righties, but so were all the throttles! Oh sure, a lefty could fly a plane, but only if he liked flying upside down and backwards.

Even the keyboards on PCs are set up for you damn righties! Take a look! Oh, sure, there's the 'Enter' button... IT'S ON THE RIGHT SIDE!!! Does the left side of the keyboard get an 'Enter' button? Hell, no! Those damn lefties don't need an 'Enter' button. I know, we'll give the lefties

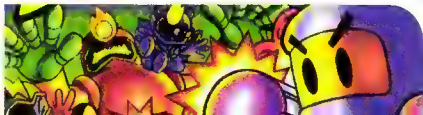
continued on page 097



medicine for the brain...

The one game that we play all the time down at the Billy Club is Super Bomberman 2. While this game is a lot of fun, it isn't without its inherent dangers and injuries. Here's a few we noticed:

1. The Twitches - Uncontrolled spasms of the hands and fingers. The only known cure is to wrap afflicted members around something cold, like a beer.
2. Razor Throat - Pain and soreness caused by yelling 'Eat this, you itchy bastard!' at your losing





READER'S TOP TEN

Tekken 3

1

Starcraft

2

Gran Turismo

3

1080 Snowboarding

4

Dead or Alive

5

Ken Griffey Baseball

6

Panzer Dragoon Saga

7

Forsaken

8

Battlezone

9

Burnout

10

Sau

▶ This month's statement, made at Dreamfusion.net (a really cool gaming palace), totally without thought to the repercussions or violence it may cause, is: 'Retro gaming and the use of 8-bit emulators on high-end PCs is cool!'

Emulators? Well, I can't say whether they're great or not, because every emulator I've ever tried hasn't worked!

Shadow
via E-mail

I think retro-emulation on a high end PC, or any PC for that matter, is kind of defeating the purpose of having the high end PC. I bought a Pentium II 400 to be able to play all the recent games coming out, not so I could run Double Dragon really, really fast! Although I could see how some folks would enjoy being able to play their old favorites whenever they wanted without having to dust off the ancient NES. Still, for me... it's pointless

David
via e-mail

What a waste of time and money! Besides, half the fun of playing those old games is playing them on the old systems. Probably most of the people who use emulators are the idiots who threw away their old gaming systems when they got their PCs and they just wish they had them back again.

Gar Washburn
via e-mail

We agree, nothing is better than playing games the way they were meant to be played, on the original systems, but emulation is great for those who can't play the original. Still, running emulated games is usually copyright infringement, unless you have permission to run the game. But titles like the Atari Classics from Midway and Digital Eclipse, which let you play arcade perfect games on PC and consoles can't be beat, especially if you don't have the cash to buy a bunch of old arcade games.

Yoshi Kawamoto
via e-mail

Next Month's Statements: Unlike the RPG genre, first person shooters are boring and repetitive to the point where no one will play them anymore.

Or reply to this one:

Hand held game consoles are completely useless, except on car trips or in the bathroom.

READER ART



This picture of Lisa's left and Garret Redfield was done by Daniel

Onesalt, of Phoenix, AZ. Include your name, address, and system type on the back of any Reader Art entries!

friends. The only cure known is to apply something cold to the afflicted area, like a beer.

3. Sorehead - Pain and swelling on the head and face. The only known cure is to stop calling your friends 'Itchy bastards' when playing.

Reader's Game REVIEWS

Winter Heat

As the Sega Saturn fades into oblivion, Sega continues to put out some unique titles. One is the sequel to **Decathlete**, **Winter Heat**. As a Sega sports game, it continues to use the **Decathlete** style of gameplay, and still retains the high res graphics its predecessor had. Likewise, to accompany the great visuals, it comes with '11 winter games on one extreme CD'

Winter Heat has some familiar events, and some that are fairly unique. Each of the events feature different scenery to relieve anyone from monotonous graphics often experienced in most sports games.

In addition to the increased number of events, there are more characters. Fortunately, the best ones from **Decathlete** are here, along with some new contenders. Each of the competitors have different skills in certain areas of the winter sports: nordic, alpine, skating, and all around. Most of the

new characters are not up to the same level as Rick Blade or Aleksei Rigel; in fact, they are just plain sad.

On the other hand, the game configuration reflects on the great Sega Sports games of the past.

The main feature of the game, though, is its multiplayer ability. **Winter Heat** supports up to four players, making it a great party game. If you enjoyed **Decathlete** and you need a reason to get a Saturn game, go get **Winter Heat**. The astounding high res graphics, superb

game play, and the addition of the multi-tap will satisfy your Saturn gaming without paying extra for imports.

★★★★★

Josh Epperson
ice-9@n64revolution.com

Einhander

Square's first attempt at a shooter is a solid gold effort, producing a game that's the next best thing to sliced bread! **Einhander** is an extremely challenging shooter and a credit to the well-worn genre of space-shooting extravaganzas. To finally defeat the title, you'll need all the help you can get.

First off, **Einhander's** control takes a little bit of getting used to when the camera shifts to a new angle. The most aggravating part of the control was that your depth perception is thrown off by the camera angle. All that aside, the fully polygonal world made for great views of the battle. The lighting was impeccable, from the shine of spotlights on your ship to the headlights on the various craft.

The enemy AI is fairly challenging. The way baddies flew onto the field was an innovative touch. Enemy design was really cool, with multi-part mid-stage and huge, **Einhander**-munching, gargantuan bosses. Square has outdone itself with the creative designs of the various ships.

Weaponry in **Einhander** is pretty creative, too. Instead of constantly picking up power-ups, you pick up a downed enemy's weapon pod, which could be a cannon, wasp, spreader, vulcan, or riot (a big electrical cannon). The good guys have a selection of three ships, each with their own distinct advantages and disadvantages, however, I won't spoil anything for those who haven't played it yet.

The sound is exceptional, with Square's usual dramatic musical flair. The sound effects, such as a neon sign being blown off a building or the satisfying explosion of the boss you'd finally beaten into a heap of scrap metal, are awesome to say the least. The one detail that marred the soundtrack was the lack of up-beat, up-tempo tunes to accompany the constant blasting of Earth scum.

Overall, **Einhander** earns five stars for a job well done!

★★★★★

Evan Baker
kenpo21@hotmail.com

StarCraft

If you've played **WarCraft** and **WarCraft 2**, then you'd have to say that **StarCraft** kicks ass! When I first saw the screen shots, I thought, 'This game is gonna suck', but I went out and bought it anyway.

The first thing you'll notice is that this game is full of long cut scenes, some of which don't even fit into the story line, or make no sense at all until you read the level titles at the end of each race campaign, but they're worth it.

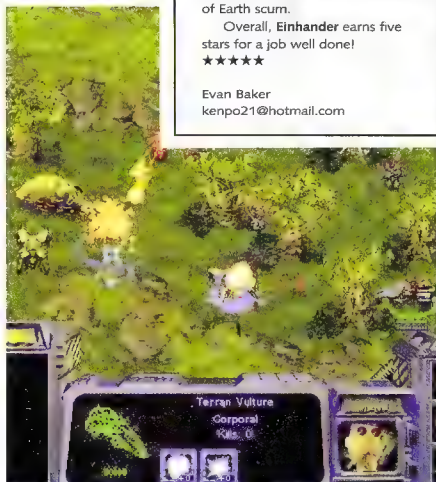
You first start out as the TERRAN, a human race with lots of technology. The mission starts out with a tutorial, then you get a briefing and you're sent out on a quest to find a local marshal named Jim Raynor.

The best part of **StarCraft** is Battle.net. You can play up to eight players over the net and there are many different types of games to play: Melee, Team Melee, Capture the Flag, or Paint Ball. The graphics are beautiful, the music rocks and the sound kicks ass.

The one thing that is bad in this game is the AI. When you send a troop out and it gets caught between buildings, it will aimlessly walk around in circles. If an enemy is attacking you while you're scouting the area, the troop just keeps on moving unless you stop it yourself. Levels can be very tough and it will take many saves and restores to finish a level. There is one level in the Terran campaign where you have to survive for 30 minutes. Again, **StarCraft** kicks ass!

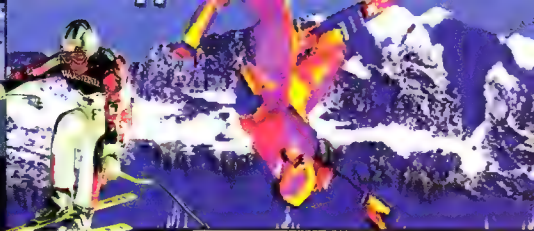
★★★★★

Matt Barile
Blizz@centuryinter.net





Seamus's first shooter, *House of the Dead*, is the best thing Sega's ever done! according to Matt Lutynski, one of our reader reviewers.



House of the Dead

House of the Dead. Sega's new two player light gun shooter, combines the atmosphere from *Night of the Living Dead* and *Resident Evil*. Your character is sent on a mission to a giant mansion to save scientists from an experiment gone horribly wrong. The mansion is infested with zombies and other creepy crawlies, like spiders, giant maggots, blobs, and rabid dogs.

True to the Sega formula of shooters, this game is chock full of action. Not only will quick reflexes and accurate aim be required, but trigger finger stamina is a must. Shot placement is critical, being that a single shot to the forehead brings them down. It's more difficult than it sounds, due to their constant and erratic movement. It is quite satisfying to blow gaping holes in their chests, amputating limbs, and shooting half a face off. The bosses are very challenging, requiring pinpoint shooting at their small weak spots, all while they are moving erratically and guarding themselves from attack.

The graphics, sadly, are disappointing. The textures are rough looking and sometimes they will drop out. I believe Sega used the low res mode to keep the action at a respectable pace. The variety of enemies and their animations are excellent. The backgrounds are well detailed and have some degree of interactivity. The Stunner is dead on, giving the Namco Gun-Con a run for the money. As far as the sounds go, all the grunts, groans, and gurgling sounds are well represented. The speech from the survivors and bosses are also well done. The music is overall good, but I feel it should've been moodier.

Unlike most games of this genre, replay value is quite high. Other games follow one track through and once the game is beaten, all is seen. Not so here. *HotD* features multiple paths through and around the mansion and most are very well hidden. Only a keen eye and a quick shot, or letting certain events happen will gain the player access. After all lives and continues are used, a map is displayed showing the progress and the paths taken. Beating the game unlocks secrets, like being able to play as different characters with different weapons and health levels, adding to the game's challenge and replay.

HotD is a top notch shooter. The only complaints are that different weapons, like rifles and shotguns, cannot be found throughout the mansion and the zombie blood is green. Hopefully there is a code to fix the blood. These are minor and easily overlooked in this excellent game. If you are a shooter fan, or played it in the arcade, by all means pick it up! You won't be disappointed. As one of Sega's last offerings, the Saturn is going out with a bang.

★★★★

Matt Lutynski
clc@neca.com

And the Winner is...

This month's Reader Review winner is Matt Lutynski. Congratulations, Matt, your prize is on the way!



Josh Epperson claims that, with the multitap accessory, *Winter Heat* becomes 'one of the greatest party games ever!' What about *Spin the Bottle* or *Quarters*, Josh?

give 'em a hand...

continued from page 094

a 'Caps Lock' button, so that when they're trying to type (we all know how clumsy lefties can be), their leTTERS will LOOK ALL Goofy. Ha, ha, ha, stupid lefties...

OK, OK. I'm better now. And I've come up with a brilliant idea that's gonna change the way us sinister guys deal with the right-handed world.

Imagine you're left-handed and you're sitting at home, watching TV after a hard day of smearing your papers. Suddenly, your life is changed by a simple TV commercial...

Voiceover: How many times has this happened to you?

Jane: Gee, what's the matter, Tommy?

Tommy: Gosh, Jane, I can't seem to do anything right. My papers are always smeared and I keep offending my Arab friends by handing them stuff with my left hand. It's ruining my life.

Voiceover: Tired of being laughed at because you're left-handed? Well, cheer up, Tommy! Your problems will disappear when you get Leftco's amazing new Right Winger!

Tommy and Jane: Wow! What is it?

Voiceover: The Leftco Right Winger® is a completely realistic right hand constructed of sturdy plastic. It writes, it fights, it works, it jerks and it's easy to use! Just slip it over your left hand, secure it with duct tape and presto! You're right-handed!

Tommy: Oh boy! Now my computer typing doesn't have all those goofy capital letters in it and I got my best score ever in Super Killer Jet Aces! All thanks to Leftco's Right Winger!

Jane: Oh, Tommy... wanna hold hands?

Tommy: You bet, Jane!

Voiceover: Another life put back on the right track, thanks to Leftco's Right Winger®. Order yours today!

Electronics Boutique

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YOU'VE BEEN MISSING!



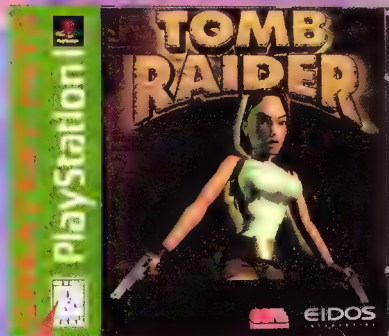
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ARCHIVE

Why guess whether a game is good or bad? Why take a chance that your hard earned cash is garnering only ho-hum thrills at the game rental store? Game Buyer takes all the risks out of buying or renting games. We now present our exclusive, conclusive Archive section, which has more games than the NBA playoffs. Damn things go on forever...

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Aerofighters Assault	Video Sys. USA	01/98	Good looking arcade-type flight sim with Sci-Fi elements.	★★★
AeroGauge	ASCII Ent.	07/98	Tired of waiting for F Zero X? Take <i>Aerogauge</i> for a spin.	★★★
All-Star Baseball '99	Acclaim Sports	07/98	Beautiful baseball game. It doesn't get any better than this on N64.	★★★★
Automobili Lamborghini	Titus	01/98	A Lamborghini racer that is sound, but uninspiring.	★★★
Banjo Kazooie	Nintendo	07/98	Standard Nintendo 3D platform fare, but then, that's EXCELLENT.	★★★★★
Bio F.R.E.A.K.S.	Midway Home	07/98	Well done, but uninspired fighting game is too simplistic for hardcore fighting game fans.	★★★
Blast Corps	Nintendo	05/97	Nintendo finally satisfies your appetite for destruction.	★★★★
Bomberman 64	Nintendo	12/97	HudsonSoft classic gets the 64-bit treatment.	★★★★★
Bust-A-Move 2	Acclaim Ent.	08/98	Classic puzzle game still offers simple, straight forward fun.	★★★★★
Chopper Attack	Midway Home	07/98	Entertaining mission based chopper game undermined by poor control and graphics.	★★★
Clay Fighter 63 1/3	Interplay	11/97	Ho-hum fighter with clay figures. Yawn.	★★
Cruisin' USA	Nintendo	01/97	This game is an accident waiting to happen.	★★
Dark Rift	Vic Tokai	06/97	It looks great, but a not so refreshing fighting experience.	★★★★
Diddy Kong Racing	Nintendo	12/97	Rare does <i>Mario Kart</i> one better with planes and cars.	★★★★★
Doom 64	Midway	04/97	Evil comes to the N64 — and it's really cool!	★★★★
Duke Nukem 64	GT Interactive	11/97	The Duke puts in an appearance on Nintendo's console.	★★★★
Extreme G	Acclaim	12/97	Futuristic weapon-filled racer.	★★★★
F1 Pole Position	Ubi Soft	10/97	The first (and only) Formula 1-style game on the N64.	★★★★
FIFA 64	Electronic Arts	06/97	Not the best team on the pitch.	★★★
FIFA: Road to the World Cup 64	Electronic Arts	01/98	EA does FIFA right this time.	★★★★
Fighter's Destiny	Ocean	03/98	Unique fighter with lots of depth.	★★★★
Forsaken 64	Acclaim Ent.	07/98	A beautiful first person shooter in the <i>Descent</i> gameplay style.	★★★★
Goldeneye 007	Nintendo	10/97	007 action in one of the best console first person shooters ever.	★★★★★
Hexen	GTI	07/97	Hexen rears its ugly head on the Nintendo 64.	★★★★
International Superstar Soccer	Konami	07/97	The best soccer game. Period.	★★★★★
Jeopardy	Gametek	04/98	Alex Trebek on your N64.	★★★
Ken Griffey Jr. Baseball	Nintendo	07/98	Simplistic gameplay will appeal to kids, but will be found lacking by everyone else.	★★★
Killer Instinct Gold	Nintendo	01/97	If you're a fan of <i>Killer Instinct</i> , you won't be disappointed; others beware.	★★★★
Mace: The Dark Age	Midway	11/97	Goth fighter with plenty of gore.	★★★
Madden 64	Electronic Arts	12/97	<i>Madden 64</i> is the same exact game as <i>Madden '98</i> , without the NFL license.	★★★★
Mario Kart 64	Nintendo	03/97	Cutesy racer featuring Nintendo mascot.	★★★★★
Mike Piazza's StrikeZone	GT Int.	08/98	Ill-conceived and badly executed baseball game strikes out on N64.	★★
Mischief Makers	Nintendo	12/97	One of those odd titles that tends to create a small dedicated audience among gamers.	★★★★
Mission Impossible	Infogrames Ent.	08/98	Too much or not enough like <i>Goldeneye</i> - depends on who you ask.	★★★
Mortal Kombat Trilogy	Williams	12/96	The first fighter on the N64 is nothing new.	★★★★
Mortal Kombat 4	Midway Home	08/98	The series that will not die makes a welcome return - at least on N64.	★★★★
Multi Racing Championship	Ocean	11/97	<i>Multi Racing Championship</i> is a fast blast racer.	★★★★
Mystical Ninja	Konami	04/98	Evil opera stars abound in wacky <i>Mario</i> -esque action RPG.	★★★★
Nagano Winter Olympics '98	Konami	04/98	Exciting winter sports made boring.	★★★
NBA Courtside	Nintendo	07/98	Surprisingly good basketball game featuring a superior computer AI.	★★★★
NBA In The Zone 64	Konami	04/98	The game that just keeps trying... and not doing so well.	★★★
NHL Breakaway 64	Acclaim Sports	05/98	The only hockey game in town on N64 for serious sports gamers.	★★★★
NFL Quarterback Club 64	Acclaim	12/97	One of the best football games for the N64.	★★★★
Pilot Wings 64	Nintendo	10/96	The N64's hang-gliding, rocket-pack, and gyro-copter flying game.	★★★★★
Quake 64	Midway	04/98	<i>Quake</i> gets the Nintendo treatment, and boy it looks pretty.	★★★★

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Quest 64	T+Hq	07/98	3D RPG with emphasis on adventure. Pretty, but predictable.	★★★
Rampage World Tour	Midway	03/98	Rampage resurrected for the N64	★★★
Robotron 64	Crave	02/98	Psychedelic shooting fun gets the 64-bit treatment.	★★★★
San Francisco Rush	Midway	12/97	Big air racing through the streets of San Francisco.	★★★★
Shadows of the Empire	Nintendo	01/97	The Empire doesn't strike out, but Nintendo reveals a dark side.	★★★
Snowboard Kids	Atbus	04/98	Snowboarding game with cute kiddy riders.	★★★★
Starfo 64	Nintendo	07/97	Fox McCloud is back, and ready to rumble!	★★★★
Super Mario 64	Nintendo	10/96	Is Mario alone worth the price of a new system? You betch!	★★★★
Tetrisphere	Nintendo	10/97	Tetris gets the spheroid treatment.	★★★★
Top Gear Rally	Midway	11/97	Rally sim for the diehard racer in you.	★★★★
Turok: Dinosaur Hunter	Acclaim	04/97	The first anti-allied bloodbath ever.	★★★★
War Gods	Williams Ent.	06/97	The fighting game that proves there is no god...	★★
WaveRace 64	Nintendo	12/96	WaveRace 64 is an adrenaline-pumping, jet skiing good time.	★★★★
Wayne Gretzky 3D Hockey 64	Williams	02/97	Mediocre hockey for your Nintendo.	★★★★
Wayne Gretzky 3D Hockey '98	Midway	02/98	Gretzky fails again.	★★★★
Wetrix	Infogrames Ent.	07/98	A rare example of a fresh idea for the puzzle genre. Addictive.	★★★★
World Cup '98	EA Sports	07/98	Solid recreation of the world's premiere sporting event.	★★★★
Yoshi's Story	Nintendo	03/98	Cutesy platformer from Nintendo is quick and easy.	★★★★
Y180° Snowboarding	Nintendo	07/98	The next best thing to face planting it on the slopes for real.	★★★★

PC

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Adrenix	Playmates Int. Ent.	06/98	Descent clone that doesn't have the graphics to match <i>Forsaken</i> .	★★★
Alien Earth	Playmates Int. Ent.	05/98	Aliens have enslaved the Earth. Play this PC game to save mankind.	★★★
Ara NGC 6397	H+a	07/98	Shooter with attractive graphics that's marred by horrible game design.	★
Arcades Greatest Hits 2	Midway	02/98	Moon Patrol , Burgerime , Root Beer Tapper , Spy Hunter and Blaster .	★★★★
Armored Fleet 2: M1A2 Abrams	Novalogic	12/97	An M1A2 Abrams tank shooter with sim aspects.	★★★★
Army Men	The 3DO Company	07/98	A cute concept that doesn't follow through with satisfying gameplay.	★★★
Atomic Bomberman	Interplay	09/97	The little bombers come to the PC.	★★★★
Battle Arena Toshinden 2	Fujitsu Int.	07/98	A mediocre fighting game that fared better on console than PC.	★★★★
Battlezone	Activision	07/98	An innovative real time strategy/action update to the arcade classic.	★★★★
Blade Runner	Virgin	02/98	The classic movie becomes a classic graphic adventure.	★★★★
Burnout Championship Drag Racing	Bethesda Softworks	07/98	Tons of adjustments makes for a satisfying amount of depth.	★★★★

PARAPPA THE RAPPER

PLAYSTATION
RETRO REVIEW

PUB. Sony • DEV. Sony • PLAYERS. 1 • RATING. ★★★★★ • PRICE. \$49.99

Still the best rap simulation – in fact, the only rap simulation – on Earth. The cracked adventures of Parappa, Sunny and the gang are an amusing diversion, but not strictly a game. It's one of those titles that you put on just to impress your friends. It's been argued that Parappa is more an art form than a game, and we'd have to agree.

The 'gameplay' is a simple case of pressing the right button at the right time, but it is possible to freestyle a rap and create something distinctive. Unfortunately, the PlayStation decides if your

rap is good or not, so there can be some disagreement. Musically, this is brilliant. The tunes are funny and catchy. The other wondrous thing is that Parappa is appealing: no matter what age you are

All in all, it's a brilliant piece of design and programming. Rumors that a sequel is in the works have yet to be confirmed, but we real ly want one



GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
C & C Red Alert	Virgin	12/96	Command and Conquer, but better.	★★★★
C & C: Red Alert Aftermath	Virgin	12/97	The standard bearer real-time strategy game.	★★★★
C & C Red Alert, Counterstrike	Virgin	06/97	Red Alert's first official add-on expansion.	★★★★
Carnageddon	Interplay	08/97	It's <i>Deathrace 2000</i> on the PC with gore galore!	★★★★
CART Precision Racing	Microsoft	02/98	CART Precision Racing is Microsoft's officially licensed Indy car simulator.	★★★★
CART Racing	Sierra Online	02/98	Cart racer officially licensed by Championship Auto Racing Teams.	★★★★
Circle of Blood	Virgin Int.	12/96	In this game, Paris means intrigue, mystery and some really bad jokes.	★★★★
Close Combat	Microsoft	12/97	Command Axis or Allied forces fighting through Germany.	★★★★
Comanche 3	Novalogic	07/97	Helicopter combat flight sim.	★★★★
Cyber Gladiators	Sierra	02/97	This could be the best 3D PC fighting game ever!	★★★★
Dark Earth	Microprose	01/98	A gothic, decaying world needs you to save it in this decadent adventure.	★★★★
Deadlock II: Shrine Wars	Accolade	05/98	Strategic planetary conquest is back and better than before.	★★★★
Diablo	Blizzard	03/97	An addictive dungeon hack-and-slasher with style.	★★★★
Die By The Sword	Interplay	06/98	A gratuitous PC hack fest - highly recommended.	★★★★
Extreme Assault	Blue Byte	10/97	A futuristic attack helicopter sim.	★★★★
Extreme Tactics	Piranha Int.	08/98	Another real-time strategy game that fails to distinguish itself.	★★★
F1 Racing Simulator	Ubi Soft	03/98	Excellent F1 sim with loads of options.	★★★★
Final Fantasy VI	Eidos Int.	07/98	One of the best RPGs ever loses nothing in its port to PC.	★★★★
Fire Fight	Electronic Arts	10/96	A hell of a top down shooter.	★★★★
Flesh Feast	Sega Soft	06/98	A zombie-killing blood bath that's fun for a while, but gets old soon.	★★★
Forsaken	Accolade Ent.	07/98	Superior shooter action, and its far prettier than the console versions.	★★★★
G-Home	7th Level	04/97	Multiple races, loads of mechs and hijackings make for a rockin' good time.	★★★★
Graduation	Mux	11/97	The player is a homeroom teacher in charge of five young ladies. Hmm...	★★★★
Grand Theft Auto	ASC Games	04/98	Law breaking fun with a top down perspective.	★★★★
Greg Norman Golf	Grolier	10/96	More golf for your PC.	★★★★
Hartball 6	Accolade	07/98	Gameplay flaws mar an otherwise adequate PC baseball game.	★★★
Heavy Gear	Activision	03/98	The game <i>MechWarrior</i> fans have been waiting for.	★★★★
Hexen 2	Activision	12/97	Medieval first person shooter with id's mind-blowing <i>Quake</i> engine.	★★★★
High Heat Baseball '99	The 300 Company	07/98	2D sports give <i>High Heat</i> a dated look, but the gameplay is superb.	★★★★
IF-22	Interactive Soft	10/97	Technical snafus undermine a realistic and competent flight-sim.	★★★★
IM1A2 Abrams	Interact. Magic	07/97	Gamers looking for an arcade-type tank simulation should look elsewhere.	★★★★
Industry Giant	Interact. Magic	08/98	Business sim that's a lot more fun than it sounds.	★★★★
Jedi Knight	LucasArts	12/97	The first person/third person shooter that gives you the force!	★★★★
Journeyman Project 3: Legacy of Time	Broderbund	04/98	Aliens, artifacts and lost cities in a gorgeous graphic adventure.	★★★★

FROGGER

PUB. Hasbro Interactive • DEV. SCI • PLAYERS. 1-2 • RATING. ★★★ • PRICE. \$39.99

Sometimes a game bears re-examination. Sometimes the true charm of a game can't be seen immediately. **Frogger** is just such a case. Expecting great things from it, we waited with bated breath for the game to arrive, and when it did, we were disappointed. Gameplay seemed erratic and ill-balanced. Graphics were sharp and cute, but characterless. However, like the original coin-op, **Frogger** was a game whose charm was not immediately apparent.

Fortunately, our readers gave it a try and realized what we did - that as a single player game, **Frogger** is absorbing and fun. Hasbro made mistakes, but still managed

to capture the flavor and feeling of the original, while dragging it kicking and screaming into the twenty first century. Why did we pull it out of the closet and try it again? The Seinfeld episode.

We won't go as far as telling you to buy this, but you should certainly rent it - you'll have fun. Some frustration, but still fun.

And isn't that just like life...

PLAYSTATION
RETRO REVIEW

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO...

ATARI

There was a time when it seemed that Atari was utterly invincible. The 2600 VCS was the system. The word 'Atari' became synonymous with video gaming fun. Everyone had an Atari system, absolutely everyone. It was the first cart-based system to take hold. Previously, you'd been locked into various versions of Pong or Duck Shoot.

Paddles and guns were the controllers of choice.

Atari upped the stakes. A single-button joystick and a plethora of different games made it stand out. It was also 'multi-colored', which sounds retarded today, but was pretty darned impressive in 1979.

The first game to be bundled with the system was **Combat**. 52 different games in one. Memory and graphic constraints meant that there were in fact 52 different variations on the same simple shooting/maze theme, but with tanks and planes, who cared? And **Combat** is still fun today - having pretty much introduced the Deathmatch format, it was a prehistoric precursor to **Quake**.

Technically, the machine was pretty retarded. An ancient 6502 processor did just about everything. The results were limited. Games like **Pitfall 2** included DSPs which improved graphics and sound, but the machine was reaching its aesthetic limits by 1982 - that's when Atari introduced the 5200. An advanced

chipset was 'borrowed' from Atari's 800 and 400 computer systems, and the machine was designed to compete with the now-successful Intellivision and ColecoVision systems. Sadly, poor marketing and some dreadful hardware flaws (notably the shockingly assembled analog sticks) meant it had a limited lifespan. It was bloody huge, too. Shipping costs for the giant, bulky behemoth were crippling. Nobody bought it. Atari rallied though, but with the equally ill-fated 7800

This machine ended up gathering dust in Atari warehouses, while Nintendo and Sega made giant strides with the NES and Master System respectively. In the interim, Atari concentrated on selling its ST line of computers. By the time the company noticed that Nintendo

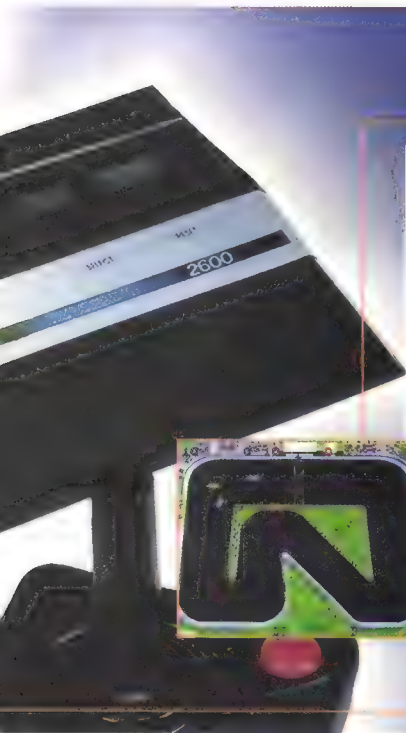
was making billions of dollars, it was too late. In typically retarded fashion, Atari (now owned by the Tramiel Dynasty) dusted off the units and tried to pitch them back into the market, with no advertising, marketing or publicity. The public continued to be unaware and the reasonably advanced 7800 died faster than the 5200.

So what about those ST computers? The Tramiels actually did a decent job, and for a while, the 520ST was a success. The 16 bit computer was way ahead of anything else at the time, with its Mac-style environment and, at the time, brilliant games. Its progress was marred by two factors - the introduction of Commodore's Amiga and the improvement in PC technology.



What next for Atari?

Well, it looks like it's all over. The corporation has been split up, sold off and may be gone forever. Some ex-Atari staff have shown up at VM Labs to work on Project X - most notably Jeff Minter, who's currently polishing a version of *Tempest 3000* for the machine. But the chances of another Atari console are virtually zero.



Atari - the good part.

It wasn't all tragedy, though. The one part of Atari that didn't screw up all the time was the clever, creative and brilliant coin-op division. It was, for most of its run, independent of the cursed Atari Corporation, and as a result, was able to produce great arcade games. Even now, under the ownership of Williams, Atari Games is making fantastic titles, like *San Francisco Rush*, *Surf Planet* and *California Speed*. But the company will be best remembered for ground breaking brilliance in the shape of *Marble Madness*, *Gauntlet* and *Paperboy*, all games which Atari Corp. completely failed to license for its home machines. Duh.

Musicians used the machine's powerful MIDI features and everyone else upgraded. The end seemed in sight. Only the Atari Lynx kept the name alive. In 1989, Atari released the powerful, brilliant color handheld Lynx (developed by Epyx). Technologically, it's still pretty much the most powerful handheld ever released (better even than Sega's Nomad) but poor battery life, a bulky design and again, dreadful marketing consigned it to the cursed Atari backwater of ill-fated products. It seemed like it

was all over. But Atari had other ideas. Not content with releasing a bunch of good systems with bad marketing, Atari decided to release a brilliant system with absolutely appalling marketing. It was time for Jaguar. The 16/32 bit machine (Atari and its fans still proclaim the machine was 64 bit) was doomed to failure. Add to that ground-breaking (digging a hole) games like *Trevor McFur*, *In The Crescent Galaxy* (what the ?) and *Club Drive*, as well as the most pathetic third party support in the history

of games and you had a total non-starter. Atari then launched the Jaguar CD, which looked just like a toilet, seat and all. It was an appropriate visual metaphor, because that's where the system, the company and the legend were headed. The Tramiels finally pulled the flush handle by selling the company at a loss to JTS (another Tramiel venture) and slicing the company and its properties into tiny pieces. All in all, one of the most fantastically disastrous downfalls in the history of industry.

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Lose Your Marbles	SegaSoft	11/97	The game that claims to be more fun than Tetris. So, is it? Almost!	★★★★
M1 Tank Platoon II	Microprose	07/98	Challenging tank simulation looks great but may be too difficult for novices.	★★★★
Madden '97	EA Sports	12/96	Madden shines on the PC.	★★★★
Mageslayer	GT Interactive	12/97	Gauntlet-like, top-down shooter with medieval attitude.	★★★★
Magic: The Gathering	Spectrum Holo.	06/97	The computerized version of Magic plays remarkably well.	★★★★
Magic: The Gathering Battlemage	Acclaim	05/97	Acclaim's first entry into the real-time strategy genre comes as a disappointment.	★★★
Master of Orion 2	Microprose	03/97	Bigger and better than the first one? Well, mostly bigger.	★★★★
MDK	Playmates	05/97	A revolutionary game to Murder, Die, Kill for...	★★★★
Mechwarrior 2: Mercenaries	Activision	01/97	Hired guns and giant robots add up to tons of fun!	★★★★
Mechwarrior 2: The Titanium Trilogy	Activision	07/98	Collection of classic mech games offers a lot of gameplay for the money.	★★★★
Microsoft Monster Truck Madness 2	Microsoft	07/98	Competent, but uninspired monster truck racing - needs more mayhem.	★★★
Might & Magic VI	The 3DO Company	07/98	Well done RPG that marks the resurgence of the genre on PCs.	★★★★
Moto Racer	EA	09/97	Breathtaking off road and on road motorcycle racing.	★★★★
Myth: The Fallen Lords	Bungie	01/98	Ground breaking medieval real-time strategy.	★★★★
NBA Live '97	EA Sports	03/97	EA's commitment to PC continued with another champion.	★★★★
NBA Live '98	Electronic Arts	01/98	3D accelerated basketball for your PC.	★★★★
NHL '97	Electronic Arts	12/96	The most revolutionary hockey game of '96.	★★★★
NHL: Powerplay	Virgin	10/96	While PowerPlay for the PC can't even compare with console hockey, it is a solid effort.	★★★★
Of Light & Darkness	Interplay	07/98	Point and click adventure in the Myst vein, but better done.	★★★★
Outlaws	Microsoft	07/98	Jet packs give an intriguing twist to the standard action/shooter gameplay.	★★★
Panzer Commander	SSI	08/98	Only WWII fanatics need apply for this solid, but basic, tank sim.	★★★
Pax Imperia: Eminent Domain	THQ	11/97	Galactic conquest at its best!	★★★★
Peter Jacobson's Golden Tee Golf	Incredible Tech.	05/98	The arcade hit makes a seamless port to PC.	★★★★
Pod	Ubi Soft	05/97	Wicked fast racer.	★★★★
Postal	Ripcord	12/97	The top down shooter that takes social dysfunction to a fun new level.	★★★★
Princess Maker 2	Ignite	09/97	Raise the princess of your dreams... Oh, just play it already...	★★★★

GARBAGE GLOSSARY

Ever marvel at the games industry's ability to come up with obscure terminology? Well, with the Game Buyer guide to jargon, you'll sound like an expert in no time at all.

1. Tri-linear Flip-Flopping

Nintendo's uncanny ability to finish products under a year late, with the continual excuse "We're making it perfect" to appease simmering fans. Examples? 64DD, F-Zero and, of course, Zelda.

2. Anti-Amazing

Also known as Anti-aliasing. This replaces those annoying jagged edges on polygons with a myopic smeared effect. Like rubbing Vaseline on your eyeballs or playing underwater.



3. Specular Highlighting

An effect employed by 'blonde' games PR women and decrepit surf burns to disguise their aging process. Alternatively, it's a cheap

graphic effect that makes everything in a game, from grass to dirt, look like it's been buffed to a high shine by marines.

4. Texture-mapping

Bland, flat polygons are smartened up by pasting a big texture on them. According to video game designers, the entire world is made of brick, dirt and tiles. On the other hand, alien worlds are made of tiles, brick and dirt.

5. Pop-in

So you're driving along the highway, and suddenly a mountain appears in front of your car. Unless you're Mohammed, this is not an act of God. It is pop-in. Happens a lot on PlayStation.

6. Sprite Collision

What happens when two fairies drive along the same road at night with no headlights.

7. Partide Effects

An incredibly complex algorithm, the result of years of pioneering mathematics, which

requires amazing amounts of processing power. Used to make people's hearts explode in *Mortal Kombat*.

8. Analog Control

A controller that enables you to make an infinite number of wrong moves. Also allows you to crash better in driving games.



9. Online Gaming

A piece of software that displays the following dialog box: 'You have been disconnected from the server. Double click to try again.'

10. Deathmatch

This is where you enter a multi-player game and are immediately blown up by some guy called 'Deathlord'. There is no way to tell how or why you were blown up. You just got blowed up, real good, that's all.

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Quake	id Software	10/96	The most highly anticipated shooter of '96.	★★★★
Quake II	Activision	02/98	Hot sequel to one of the best first person shooters ever.	★★★★
Quake Mission Pack No. 1	Activision	06/97	New Quake levels officially approved by ID Software.	★★★★
Rally Championship	Virgin Int.	06/97	Not from Sega, not as pretty, but maybe more satisfying.	★★★★
Realms of The Haunting	Interplay	04/97	One part Resident Evil plus one part Doom equals a surprisingly good adventure.	★★★★
Red Baron II	Sierra Online	02/98	Biplane dogfighting in the skies over Europe.	★★★★
Redneck Rampage Rides Again	Interplay	08/98	Funny first person shooter that suffers from an ancient game engine.	**
Riven	Acclaim	03/98	Point and click adventure makes its way to PlayStation	★★★★
Rocket Jockey	SegaSoft	02/97	Wedge a rocket between your legs for the ride of your life!	★★★★
Rocky Mountain Trophy Hunter	GT Int.	08/98	You might be a redneck, if you buy this game.	★★
Sabre Ace: Conflict over Korea	Virgin	01/98	Realistic action in the skies over Korea.	★★★★
Screamers 2	Virgin	12/96	Screaming racer.	★★★★
Shadow Master	Psygnosis	07/98	Standard first person shooter fare that works better on the PC than it did on console.	★★
Soldiers At War	SSI	08/98	Solid turn based combat tactics game that feels outdated.	★★
Space Bar	SegaSoft	10/97	Heavy Metal meets Sam Spade.	★★★★
Spec Ops	Ripcord Games	07/98	Control Special Forces troops on covert operations.	★★★★
StarCraft	Blizzard Ent.	07/98	Much anticipated sci fi follow up to WarCraft II succeeds brilliantly.	★★★★
Star Fleet Academy	Interplay	11/97	Join Starfleet! See the Universe! Violate the Prime Directive!	★★★★
Star Trek Generations	Microprose	08/97	Generic Star Trek movie license game.	★★
Star Wars Rebellion	LucasArts	06/98	Hidden somewhere within the horrible control interface is a decent game.	**
Stratosphere	Ripcord Games	08/98	A 'you build and blast 'em' cyber rock fight.	★★★★
Sub Culture	Ubi Soft	12/97	Undersea adventure with beautiful environments and challenging missions.	★★★★
Swarm	Reflexive Ent.	07/98	Retro-type shooter will appeal mostly to gamers feeling nostalgic.	★★
Taken: Letter of the Law	Software Sculptures	07/98	More movie watching than gameplay. Cliffhanger ending is infuriating.	**
Terminator SkyNet	Bethesda Soft	01/97	Terminator: SkyNET is going to give Quake a run for its money.	★★★★
The Elder Scroll: Daggerfall	Bethesda Soft	12/96	A complete world to explore from the comfort of your own home.	★★★★
Total Annihilation	GT Interactive	12/97	Real-time warfare you won't want to miss!	★★★★
Triple Play '97	EA Sports	11/96	The best arcade baseball game of '96 on the PC.	★★★★
Twinsen's Odyssey	Activision	10/97	An imaginative adventure with extraordinary game play.	★★★★
Ultimate Race Pro	Microprose	06/98	Jaw-dropping graphics go along with superior racing fun.	★★★★
Unreal	GT Int.	08/98	Quake 2 killer features superior AI and gorgeous graphics.	★★★★
Uprising	3DO	12/97	A rule breaking combo of first-person action and real-time strategy.	★★★★
Virtua Fighter PC	Sega	11/96	Sega's most valuable property on a PC near you.	★★★★
WarGames	MGM Int.	07/98	Another real-time strategy game that isn't innovative enough to distinguish itself.	★★
Wing Commander Prophecy	Electronic Arts	02/98	The latest in the Wing Commander series (and it's much better now!)	★★★★
Witchaven II	Capstone	10/96	A cross between Might and Magic and Doom .	★★★★
World Cup '98	EA Sports	08/98	Superior graphics and gameplay make for the ultimate PC soccer game.	★★★★
Worms 2	Microprose	02/98	Cute worms are back for more wormicide.	★★★★
X-Com Apocalypse	Microprose	10/97	More turn-based strategy and combat!	★★★★
X-Men: Ravagers of Apocalypse	Wizard Works	12/97	Quake add-on that puts you in the world of the X-Men.	★★★★
X-Wing vs. Tie Fighter	LucasArts	07/97	The force is strong in this one!	★★★★
Z	Virgin	11/96	Killed all your robots? Don't worry, we'll make more.	★★
Zork: Grand Inquisitor	Activision	01/98	All the puzzles, humor and twisted notions that make Zork great, again.	★★★★

PLAYSTATION

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Ace Combat 2	Namco	08/97	Fighter plane games don't get any better than this!	★★★★
AD&D Iron & Blood	Acclaim	12/96	Smelly fighting game with an inadequate license.	**
Adidas Power Soccer '98	Psygnosis	06/98	Better than its predecessor, but overall an average soccer game.	★★
All Star Baseball '97	Acclaim	07/97	The Big Hurt does...	★★
Alundra	Working Designs	01/98	Alundra is almost a dead ringer for a 32-bit version of Landstalker .	★★★★

PLAYSTATION CONTINUED

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Anoret Racing	Electronic Arts	11/96	An excellent racing sim.	★★★★
Arcades Greatest Hits 2	Midway	02/98	Moon Patrol, BurgerTime, Root Beer Tapper, Spy Hunter and Blaster.	★★★★
Armored Core	SCEA	12/97	Any fan of giant robot anime will want to climb into this game.	★★★★
Atari Collection 2	Midway	04/98	Paperboy, Road Blasters, Marble Madness, Millipede, Gauntlet and Crystal Castles.	★★★★
Auto Destruct	Electronic Arts	02/98	'Why no, officer, I don't know how many people I killed.'	★★★★
Azure Dreams	Konami	08/98	A middle of the road RPG with a little Monster Rancher thrown in.	★★★
Ballblazer Champions	Lucas Arts	06/97	Update of LucasArts classic just barely makes the grade.	★★★
Battle Arena Toshinden 3	Playmates	06/97	Fighter with lots of new perks with some old pesky quirks.	★★★★
Battlestations	Electronic Arts	05/97	Yet another reason to say, 'You sank my battleship!'	★★★★
Beast Wars: Transformers	Hasbro	04/98	Transformer series gets a game.... Whoopee...	★★★
Beyond the Beyond	SCEA	10/96	The first true RPG for the PlayStation.	★★★
Bio FREAKS.	Midway Home Ent.	07/98	War Gods clone with most of the crappiness taken out.	★★★★
Black Dawn	Virgin	12/96	An excellent flight sim/shooter with loads of options, and exceptional play mechanics.	★★★★
Blast Chamber	Activision	12/96	Flawed, but entertaining multiplayer game.	★★★★
Blasto	Sony	06/98	Uninspired game design adds nothing to the genre.	★★
Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain	Crystal Dyn.	12/96	Sharp fangs and a sharper sword — Kain's bite is deep and consuming.	★★★★
Bloody Roar	Sony	05/98	Freaky, disturbing mutant animals in a fight to the death.	★★★★
Brahma Force	Jaleco	06/97	This ain't Kileak , that's for sure.	★★★★
Bravo Air Race	THQ	10/97	Airplane racer on tracks... Gimme a break.	★★
Breath of Fire II	Capcom	05/98	Old school graphics don't hold back the old school RPG gameplay.	★★★★
Broken Helix	Konami	07/97	A cross between Doom and Resident Evil .	★★★★
Broken Sword: SOTT	THQ	02/98	A graphic adventure features all that makes the genre good and bad at the same time.	★★★★
Bubsy 3D	Accolade	12/96	Cartoonish-looking 3D platformer.	★★★
Bug Riders	GT Int.	12/97	A racing game with giant flying bugs.	★★
Bushido Blade	SCEA	11/97	Trail blazing weapon based fighting game.	★★★★
Caesars Palace	Interplay	12/97	Blackjack, craps, roulette, three slot machines, and baccarat, but no poker!	★★★
Cardinal Syn	Sony	08/98	Everything you could ask for in a fighting game - besides the fun.	★★★★
Carnage Heart	SCEA	03/97	Warning! You may be too stupid to play this game! Programmer needed.	★★★★
CART World Series	SCEA	12/97	A racing experience that will appeal more to real race fans than gamers.	★★★★
Castlevania: SOTN	Konami	11/97	Gameplay is, as ever, the main attraction of Castlevania , and it has it in spades.	★★★★
Clock Tower	ASCII Ent.	11/97	Now here's a scary game. Run away from a guy with BIG scissors!	★★★★
Codename: Tenka	Psygnosis	03/97	The PlayStation's answer to Quake .	★★★★
Colony Wars	Psygnosis	12/97	The space flight sim that really puts you in the cockpit.	★★★★
C & C: Red Alert	Virgin	12/97	The standard bearing real-time strategy game.	★★★★
Contra: Legacy of War	Konami	01/97	Sometimes 3D just ain't what it's cracked up to be.	★★★★
Cool Boarders	SCEA	02/97	A little light on the realism, but fun snowboarding just the same.	★★★★
Cool Boarders 2	SCEA	12/97	Takes a good snowboarding formula and makes it better.	★★★★
Couner Crisis	GT Int.	12/97	A really bad bike messenger game... really bad.	★★
Crash Bandicoot	SCEA	10/96	The PlayStation platformer mascot's debut.	★★★★
Crash Bandicoot 2	SCEA	12/97	Sony's mascot makes an encore appearance.	★★★★
Critical Depth	GT Int.	12/97	Twisted Metal underwater.	★★★★
Croc	Fox Int.	10/97	Mario 64 -esque platformer.	★★★★
Darkest Conflict	Electronic Arts	10/97	Could have been great, but still better than Wing Commander 4 .	★★★★
Dead or Alive	Tecmo	05/98	The best fighting game to come along in quite a while.	★★★★
Deathtrap Dungeon	Eidos Int.	06/98	Slow gameplay, unforgiving control. Basically, Tomb Raider gone wrong.	★★
Descent Maximum	Interplay	05/97	Descent taken to the maximum...	★★★★
Destruction Derby 2	Psygnosis	12/96	Outstanding sequel of a destruction derby game.	★★★★
Diablo	Electronic Arts	06/98	The PC mega hit makes the journey to PlayStation unscathed.	★★★★
Die Hard Trilogy	Fox Int.	10/96	Three times the action! Three times the explosions! A zillion times the blood.	★★★★
Discworld 2	Psygnosis	10/97	Terry Pratchett's Discworld universe, with all the series' wacky characters.	★★★★
Disruptor	Universal	12/96	First person shooter with psionic attitude.	★★★★
Dragonball G's Final Bout	Bandai	02/98	Anime fighter makes it Stateside.	★★★★

PLAYSTATION CONTINUED

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown	GT Int.	05/98	Duke Nukem never looked better... Oops. Yes, he has.	***
Dynasty Warriors	KOEI	09/97	Weapon-based fighter set in ancient China.	*****
Einherder	Sony	06/98	Classic shooter gameplay that won't make you go blind.	*****
Excalibur 2555 A.D.	Sirlach	01/98	Try to find King Arthur's stolen sword in the 3D adventure.	**
Fantastic 4	Acclaim	10/97	Mr. Fantastic would be embarrassed.	*
Felony 11-79	ASCII Ent.	10/97	Run down pedestrians, drive through buildings, crash into cop cars and have fun.	*****
FIFA '97	EA Sports	01/97	Stinker of a striker game.	***
FIFA 98	EA Sports	02/98	Once again, the best soccer game available.	*****
Fighting Force	Eidos	12/97	A button mashing take on Final Fight from Eidos and Core.	*****
Final Doom	Williams	11/96	It's like Doom except... What am I saying? It is Doom!	*****
Final Fantasy Tactics	SCEA	01/98	Squaresoft's strategy oriented RPG.	*****
Final Fantasy VII	SCEA	10/97	Squaresoft's four disc landmark RPG.	*****
Formula 1	Psygnosis	12/96	When it comes to racing, F1 has the winning formula.	*****
Formula 1 Championship Edition	Psygnosis	12/97	Everything you could want in an F1 racing game.	*****
Forsaken	Acclaim Ent.	07/98	Cutting edge graphics give new life to generic corridor shooter play.	*****
Fox Sports Soccer '99	Fox Int.	08/98	Simplistic soccer game can't live up the standard of its competition.	**
Frogger	Hasbro Int.	12/97	We hated it, you loved it... go figure...	***
G-Police	Psygnosis	11/97	Stunning 3D graphics, amazing gameplay - go for a flight with the GI	*****
Granstream Saga	T+Hq	08/98	Romantic RPG features an innovative combat system.	*****
Gex: Enter the Gecko	Midway	04/98	Our favorite green lizard is back with more attitude.	*****
Honest in the Shell	THQ	01/98	One of the most original shooters for the PlayStation with an anime inspiration.	*****
Goal Storm '97	Konami	05/97	The game that FIFA should have been.	*****
Grand Tour Racing '98	Activision	10/97	A combination of both on- and off-road racing in one package.	*****
Gran Turismo	Sony	07/98	Serious contender for the 'best racing game of all time' title.	*****
Hercules	Virgin Int.	10/97	Adventure based on Disney Hercules movie.	*****
Hot Shots Golf	Sony	04/98	A surprisingly fun golf game featuring big-headed characters.	*****
Independence Day	Fox Int.	04/97	A wannabe flight sim with a movie license to kill.	**
Intelligent Qube	SCEA	12/97	A puzzle game so good, it makes us forget what we ever saw in Tetris .	***
Jeremy McGrath SuperCross '98	Acclaim Ent.	07/98	Lousy graphics and control undermine a potentially good game.	**
Jersey Devil	Sony	08/98	Outer(?) character-based platformer. Not very original, but adequate.	**
Jet Moto	SCEA	01/97	It's no WaveRace 64 , but Jet Moto goes where its Nintendo rival can't.	*****
Jet Moto 2	SCEA	12/97	More expansion disc than sequel, still a hell of a hoverbike racer!	*****
Jimmy Johnson VR Football '98	Interplay	12/97	It's not that VR Football is bad, it's just not quite up to par with the big boys.	**
Judge Dredd	Activision	05/98	Dredd-ful light gun shooter complements the bad movie.	**
Kings Field II	ASCII Ent.	01/97	An RPG for the masses.	*****
Klonoa	Namco	03/98	Strange, but fun adventure platform game.	*****
Lethal Enforcers I & II	Konami	08/97	Lethal Enforcers I & II in one place - hope you like light gun games.	**
Lode Runner	Natsume	02/98	'80s classic gets a face lift.	***
Lost World	Electronic Arts	11/97	OK, The Lost World is pretty - really pretty. It also blows - really blows.	**
Machine Hunter	MGM Int.	09/97	Top down, 360-degree shooting mayhem.	*****
Madden '97	EA Sports	11/96	The champ comes back after a season on the injured reserve list.	*****
Madden '98	EA Sports	11/97	One of the better Maddens in years.	*****
Marvel Super Heroes	Capcom	12/97	Marvel characters duke it out in this 2D fighter.	*****
Maximum Force	Midway	11/97	By the team that developed Area 51 - Maximum Force is the same game.	***
MechWarrior 2	Activision	04/97	New missions and a new look take Mech combat to the next level.	*****
Mega Man 8	Capcom	05/97	Mega Man 8 - the best 2D platformer on a 32-bit system since Guardian Heroes .	*****
Mega Man X4	Capcom	11/97	Mega Man X4 is level after level of traditional 2D shooting.	**
Micro Machines V3	Midway	04/98	Mini cars and trucks race on household surfaces... Too Cool.	*****
MK Mythologies: Sub-Zero	Midway	12/97	Clumsy attempt at an action game based on Mortal Kombat .	**
MLB '98	SCEA	10/97	One heck of a good baseball game.	*****
MLB '99	Sony	07/98	Best baseball game on PlayStation, but still needs tweaking to be great.	*****
MLB Permanent Race	SCEA	12/96	The game is 'too little, too late'.	***

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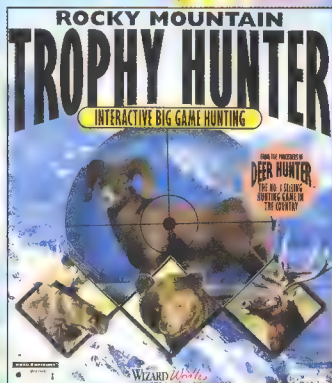
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GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Monopoly	Hasbro Int.	05/98	For some reason, the board game has been turned into a videogame.	★★
Monster Rancher	Tecmo	12/97	Raise monsters, make 'em fight, have a good time.	★★★★★
Motorboot Grand Prix	SCEA	11/96	A must own cartoony racer with style.	★★★★
Namco Museum Vol. 4	Namco	07/97	The Return of Ishtar, Assault, Ordny, Pac-Land, and The Genji and The Heike Clans.	★★★★
Namco Museum Vol. 5	Namco	12/97	Collection including Dragon Spirit, Pac Mania.	★★★★
Nanotek Warrior	Virgin	04/97	A good case for re-inventing the wheel, or the shooter anyway.	★★★★
N20: Nitrous Oxide	Fox Int.	08/98	A must for hardcore shooter fans, old school gaming for everyone else.	★★★★
NASCAR '98	EA Sports	11/97	You might be a NASCAR fan, and if you are, this is the perfect game for you.	★★★★
NBA Fastbreak '98	Midway	01/98	Average playing basketball game brought to you by Midway.	★★★
NBA In The Zone '98	Konami	02/98	No-hum basketball game tries it again.	★★★
NBA In the Zone 2	Konami	01/97	A definite must buy, and one of the best sports games of 1997.	★★★★
NBA Live '97	Electronic Arts	12/96	EA's jump to polygons actually a step back?	★★★★
NBA Live '98	Electronic Arts	12/97	Live '98 is a great HOCKEY engine runned by pesky basketball players and rules.	★★★★
NBA Shootout '97	SCEA	05/97	This year, it's got game. the best NBA sim available.	★★★★
NBA Shootout '98	Sony	05/98	One of the best basketball games around, but still far from perfect.	★★★★
NCAA Football '98	EA Sports	10/97	The first 32-bit college football game.	★★★★
NCAA Gamebreaker	SCEA	11/96	From the developers of NFL Gameday comes the first 32-bit college football game.	★★★★
NCAA Gamebreaker '98	SCEA	01/98	What can we say about a game that just does everything right?	★★★★
NCAA March Madness	EA Sports	04/98	Uses the NBA Live '97 engine, but good gameplay saves it.	★★★★
Need for Speed II	Electronic Arts	06/97	Exotic cars, decent game play and graphics.	★★★★
Need For Speed III	Electronic Arts	06/98	Gameplay worthy of the serie's best seller status is finally added.	★★★★★
Need for Speed V-Rally	Electronic Arts	12/97	A bland auto zoom-zoomers you won't want from Santa.	★★★
Newman/Hass Racing	Psygnosis	04/98	A yawn of a dull time racing F1.	★★
NFL Gameday '97	SCEA	02/97	The best football game ever made gets even better!	★★★★★
NFL Gameday '98	SCEA	11/97	The best football game ever made gets even better! And better still!	★★★★★
NFL Quarterback Club '97	Acclaim	11/96	QBC '97 finds the right combination for victory.	★★★★
NHL '97	Electronic Arts	12/96	Yet another adequate hockey game.	★★★
NHL '98	EA	12/97	The only hockey game better than being there.	★★★★★
NHL Breakaway '98	Acclaim	12/97	Breakaway '98 is a good hockey game, not great, but very playable.	★★★★
NHL Face Off '97	SCEA	12/96	Entertaining hockey experience.	★★★
NHL Face Off '98	SCEA	12/97	Face Off was 97's PlayStation hockey game of the year, for '98, it's gotten better.	★★★★
NHL Powerplay '98	Virgin Int.	09/97	One of the best hockey games available.	★★★★
Nightmare Creatures	Activision	12/97	3rd person action title with werewolves and scary monsters - oh yeah.	★★★★
Nuclear Strike	Electronic Arts	11/97	The latest excellent episode in the Strike series.	★★★★
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee	GT Interactive	11/97	Outstanding 2D platformer in the tradition of Flashback.	★★★★★
Ogre Battle	Atlus	09/97	Ogre Battle offers nothing new to the RPG/strategy genre.	★★★
One	ASC Games	02/98	Action packed shooter that is both great and flawed.	★★★
OverBlood	Electronic Arts	06/97	OverBlood has the gameplay, but lacks any compelling excitement to back it up.	★★★
Pandemonium	Crystal Dyn.	12/96	Wacky 2 1/2D platformer.	★★★★
Pandemonium 2	Midway	12/97	The sequel to 96 sleeper hit captures the hearts of 2 1/2D platform fans once again.	★★★★
Parappa the Rapper	SCEA	10/97	Rap away your troubles and cares in this quixotic title from Sony.	★★★★★
Peak Performance	Atlus	07/97	Blending standard street racing with a touch of rally action.	★★★★
Perfect Weapon	ASC Games	12/96	Fighting game or action game, this attempt at genre mixing is far from perfect.	★★★
Persona	Atlus	02/97	All the right RPG elements are there, but never come together.	★★★
PGA '98	Electronic Arts	12/97	PGA '98 is the best golf game available on the Playstation.	★★★★
Pitfall!	Accolade	12/96	Odd futuristic ball game.	★★★★
Pitfall 3D	Activision	05/98	Pitfall Harry has aged gracefully, but isn't as fun as he used to be.	★★★★
Point Blank	Namco	02/98	Light gun action that requires the GunCon.	★★★★
Porsche Challenge	SCEA	10/97	This looks a heck of a lot better than it actually is, but you do get to race a Porsche.	★★★
Powerboat Racing	Interplay	05/98	Speed boat racing game with a few quirks, but plenty of fun.	★★★★
PowerSlave	Playmates	06/97	Add Doom -style gameplay to alien folklore, and you've got PowerSlave .	★★★★
Procyon	Konami	08/97	Incredible multiplayer game!	★★★★

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Project Horned Owl	SCEA	10/96	It's nice to look at, but PlayStation's first lightgun shooter misses its mark.	***
Psychic Force	Acclaim	02/97	You don't need to be a psychic to know this game isn't destined for greatness.	***
Puzzle Fighter	Capcom	12/96	More proof that great games don't have to be technological wonders.	★★★★
Rage Racer	Namco	04/97	Rage Racer takes the scenic route, but is it the same old road?	★★★★
Rally Cross	SCEA	05/97	Finally, an off-road racer that really takes off!	★★★★
Rampage World Tour	Midway	01/98	Update of the arcade classic.	**
Rascal	Psygnosis	06/96	A bad character plus bad control equals a platform nightmare.	***
Raystorm	Working Design	08/97	Truly superior fast paced shooter.	★★★★
Raytracer	THQ	02/98	Flashy racer that leaves you wanting more.	***
Reboot	Electronic Arts	05/98	The cartoon gets an 'Episode Zero' game that reveals the origin of it all!	★★★★
Red Asphalt	Interplay	12/97	Blast and run down opponents in this futuristic racer.	★★★★
Reel Fishing	Natsume	12/97	It's a fishing game, just like the title says.	***
ReLoaded	Interplay	02/97	Surprise! Gratuitous violence and gore can be boring.	**
Resident Evil 2	Capcom	02/98	The granddaddy of all 3D adventures spawns the perfect brood.	★★★★★
Resident Evil: Director's Cut	Capcom	12/97	The game that set the horror standard tries it again.	★★★★★
Ridge Racer Revolution	Namco	10/96	Ridge racing is still fun, but it's running out of gas.	★★★★
Road Rash 3D	Electronic Arts	08/98	Do polygons make rolling mayhem more fun? You bet!	★★★★
Rush Hour	Psygnosis	06/97	A different approach to racing games provides some much needed variety.	★★★★
Saga Frontier	Sony	05/98	Why bother with multiple storylines when one isn't all that fun?	***
San Francisco Rush	Midway Home Ent.	07/98	No where near the greatness of the N64 game. A disappointment.	**
Sentient	Psygnosis	06/97	Ow! My head hurts. I had to play a largely text-driven adventure game all night.	***
Sentinel Returns	Psygnosis	08/98	Classic 8-bit strategy game makes a successful jump to the next generation.	★★★★
Shadow Master	Psygnosis	02/98	Fantastic graphics, brilliant special effects, and lots of fans flare, but that's all.	★★★★
Shipwreckers	Psygnosis	12/97	A refreshing, top down action game.	★★★★
Skullmonkeys	Electronic Arts	03/98	Claymation looking platformer is pretty, but unsatisfying.	***
Soul Blade	Namco	02/97	Flashy sword-based fighter - not to be missed.	★★★★
Soviet Strike	EA	12/96	Classic gameplay and 32-bit presentation make a killer game.	★★★★★
Spawn	SCEA	01/98	Comic book anthro goes from bad movie to worse game.	*
Speed Racer	Jaleco	05/98	A better racing game than a Speed Racer game.	***
Spider	BMG Int.	03/97	The game with eight legs and a rocket launcher.	★★★★
Spot Goes to Hollywood	Virgin	11/96	Does anyone like a soda game that's lukewarm and flat?	**
Stackers	Tecmo	11/97	A competent challenge for fans of the puzzle genre.	***
Star Gladiator	Capcom	11/96	The cosmic crowd in Star Gladiator takes 3D fighting to the outer limits.	★★★★
Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Käsi	Lucas Arts	01/98	Great license, decent graphics, mediocre fighting game.	**
Steel Reign	SCEA	11/97	Futuristic tank shooter	★★★★
Street Fighter Collection	Capcom	11/97	Super Street Fighter , Super Street Fighter 2 Turbo , and SF Alpha 2 Gold .	★★★★
Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha	Capcom	11/97	Another Street Fighter game, but oh, so good!	★★★★★
Street Racer	Ubisoft	12/96	It's cute. It's funny. It's the lighter side of 32-bit gaming.	***
Suikoden	Konami	12/96	Konami gets back into RPGs in a big way.	★★★★★
Swagman	Eidos	08/97	Bland adventure game.	***
Syndicate Wars	Electronic Arts	09/97	The problem with Syndicate Wars is it was designed for the PC, not the PlayStation.	***
Tail of the Sun	SCEA	07/97	Just another 'caveman building a tusk tower' kind of a game.	★★★★
Tekken 3	Namco	07/98	Another classic fighting game conversion takes its place in the series.	★★★★★
Ten Pin Alley	ASC Games	02/97	It's just like bowling...	★★★★
Tennis Arena	Ubisoft	03/98	Advanced Pong on grass.	***
Test Drive 4	Accolade	12/97	The best roadracer on the PlayStation and a darn fun game.	★★★★
Test Drive Off Road	Accolade	06/97	Down and dirty off road racing.	★★★★
The City of Lost Children	Psygnosis	05/97	Bringing the magic of a special movie to the PlayStation.	★★★★
Theme Hospital	Electronic Arts	06/98	Design and manage your own hospital in Bullfrog's interesting sim.	★★★★
Thunder Truck Rally	Psygnosis	05/97	Most off-road fans will find something here to like.	***
Tiger Shark	GT Int.	03/97	Going down? This submerged shooter ain't no Aquanaut's Holiday .	***
Time Commando	Activision	12/96	It's said that Time will tell, but in this game, it just groans.	**

Electronics Boutique

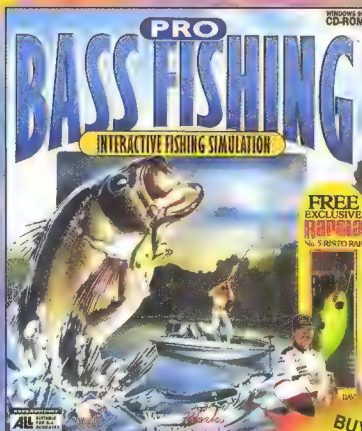
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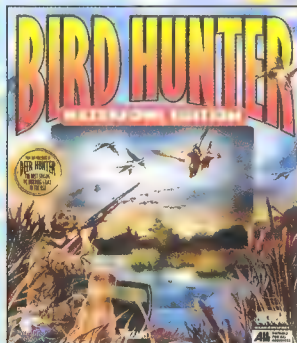
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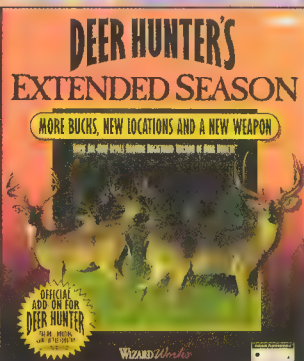


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PLAYSTATION CONTINUED

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Time Crisis	Namco	11/97	Namco's outstanding gun game, but you have to have the GunCon...	★★★★
Tobal No. 1	SCEA	11/96	Tobal No. 1 brings an entire new element to the fighting game genre.	★★★★★
Tokyo Highway Battle	Jaleco	12/96	The game that proves that speeding can be fun and profitable.	★★★★
Tomb Raider	EIDOS	12/96	If the game doesn't blow you away, she just might.	★★★★★
Tomb Raider 2	EIDOS	12/97	She's bad, she's back and you know you want to play with her.	★★★★★
Tombal	Sony	08/98	Strange but fun platformer incorporates RPG elements for a twist.	★★★★
Treasures of the Deep	Namco	10/97	Underwater combat not to be missed.	★★★★
Triple Play '98	Electronic Arts	06/97	There is currently no baseball game close to the overall solidity of Triple Play '98 .	★★★★
Triple Play '99	EA Sports	05/98	Despite some flaws, one of the best baseball games on PlayStation.	★★★★
Twisted Metal 2	SCEA	01/97	Lots of violence, weapons and outrageous autos.	★★★★
Vandal Hearts	Konami	04/97	A turn-based strategy game wrapped in a neat RPG package.	★★★★
Vigilante 8	Activision	08/98	Basically Twisted Metal with Interstate 76 characters, but really well done.	★★★★★
Virtual Pool	Interplay	02/97	Play pool at home instead of in a bar.	★★★★
VMX Racing	Playmates	06/97	Average dirt bike racing game.	★★★
VR Baseball '97	Interplay	05/97	Interplay's bid for the title comes up a couple of frames short.	★★★★
VR Baseball '99	Interplay	08/98	Not too pretty, but the gameplay is superior to most of its PSX competition.	★★★
VR Golf	VR Sports	12/96	VR Golf is a definite for golf fans that don't have access to a PC.	★★★★
Vs.	THQ	12/97	A collection of stereotypes that happen to fight one another.	★★
Warcraft II: The Dark Saga	Electronic Arts	09/97	One of the best PC games of all time is okay on the PlayStation.	★★
WCW Nitro	THQ	02/98	Wrestling action for the die hard fan.	★★★
WCW Vs. The World	THQ	06/97	WCW is a solid game that will appeal to wrestling fans.	★★★★
Wild Arms	Capcom	06/97	Wild Arms is the RPG to play if you already spent two weeks with FF7 .	★★★★★
Wing Commander IV	Electronic Arts	05/97	Fans of the series won't be disappointed, but everyone else will.	★★★★
WipEout XL	Psygnosis	11/96	Futuristic racing never looked so good!	★★★★★
World Cup '98	EA Sports	07/98	Repackaged FIFA game with most (but not all) of the flaws corrected.	★★★★
X-Men: Children of the Atom	Acclaim	03/98	Hmm... A bad 2D fighting game...	★★
Xenious 3D/G	Namco	08/97	Well, it's Xenious in 3D (don't know what the G is for...).	★★★
X-Men vs. Street Fighter	Capcom	07/98	Another in the long line of Street Fighter variants. Unbalanced, but fun.	★★★
2Xtreme	SCEA	01/97	A sequel that's just 2 little 2 late.	★★★
3D Baseball	Crystal Dyn.	11/96	Not be the best baseball game on the market, but still good.	★★★★

SATURN

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
Albert Orysey	Working Designs	09/97	Outstanding Japanese RPG.	★★★★
Amok	Sega	04/97	A good, solid game, but it could have been much more.	★★★
Area 51	Williams	02/97	If shooting freaks from outer space is your thing...	★★★
Bug Tool	Sega	02/97	The only cure for Bug Too 's sad gameplay may be Raid .	★★
Burning Rangers	Sega	08/98	Futuristic fire fighting game is one of Saturn's few remaining bright spots.	★★★★
Bust A Move 3	Natsume	12/97	Bubble popping puzzle game you simply must play.	★★★★
Command & Conquer	Westwood	04/97	C&C marks the return of real time strategy for home consoles.	★★★★
Crimewave	Eidos	02/97	Like shooting, driving and donuts? Here's your game.	★★★
Crypt Killer	Konami	06/97	Crypt Killer is like a shooting gallery at the country fair.	★★★
Dark Savor	Sega	02/97	The first truly great RPG on the Saturn.	★★★★
Daytona USA CCE	Sega	01/97	Calling this game 'Daytona Remix' would have been closer to the truth.	★★★★
Demolition	Sega	10/96	Sega raises the bar for track and field games.	★★★★
Die Hard Arcade	Sega	04/97	Arcade perfect, arcade short.	★★★★
Dragon Force	Working Designs	02/97	The perfect console strategy game.	★★★★
Duke Nukem 3D	Sega	12/97	The best console conversion of the Duke Nukem 3D experience.	★★★★
Enemy Zero	Sega	02/98	Fly for the Emperor!	★★★★
Fighters Megamix	Sega	03/97	Fighting Vipers & Virtua Fighter . A fighting game fan's dream come true.	★★★★
Fighting Vipers	Sega	12/96	The fully loaded model of the Cadillac of fighting games.	★★★★

SATURN CONTINUED

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	COMMENTS	RATING
3D Pinball	Activision	12/96	A futuristic blend of Tag and Capture the Flag.	★★★★
Herz's Adventures	Lucas Arts	10/97	A top-down action adventure based on the mythological exploits of Hercules.	★★★★
Beneath	GT Interactive	03/97	Attention, wizards and warriors, your game is here.	★★★★
House of the Dead	Sega	06/98	Not much to look at, but light gun fun in Sega's classic style.	★★★★
Totem	Working Designs	04/96	One of the best strategies title of the year.	★★★★
Last Bronx	Sega	01/98	Brutal fighting from the masters at Sega.	★★★★
Lunar	Atlus	05/97	Lunacy plays like a movie - a mixed blessing at best.	★★★★
Maximum Head	Edios	12/96	An average first person shooter.	★★★★
Motor GT	Sega	09/97	Outstanding motorcycle racing game on the Isle of Mann.	★★★★
Mass Destruction	ASC Games	12/97	Mass Destruction plays just like it reads. Top down tank action.	★★★★
Mr. Bomb	Sega	12/96	One of the most bizarre platformers ever.	★★★★
NFL 97	Sega	02/97	Looking for a quality football game? This ain't it...	★★★★
Nights	Sega	10/96	In an industry when anything can happen, 'anything' just did.	★★★★
Palmer Bros. Saga	Sega	05/98	The classic Saturn shooter is turned into a beautiful RPG.	★★★★
Saturn Bomberman	Sega	10/97	As Bomberman games go, this is probably the best since Super Bomberman 2.	★★★★
Scavenger	Sega	06/97	Scavenger's second Saturn title looks more like a tombstone than a milestone.	★★★★
Sonic	SegaSoft	05/97	Based on the popular underground comic book series.	★★★★
Space Harrier Vol. 1	Spaz	08/97	Space Harrier, Afterburner 2, and Outrun	★★★★
Sega Soccer Cup Championship	Sega	01/98	Home conversion of Sega arcade racer.	★★★★
Shining the Holy Ark	Sega	08/97	The best Phantasy Star RPG yet.	★★★★
Shining Ark	Working Designs	04/96	An above average action/RPG.	★★★★
Sky Target	Sega	09/97	Sky Target fails to live up to expectations.	★★★★
Sonic 3D Blast	Sega	01/97	A less than dramatic 32-bit debut for gaming's favorite hedgehog.	★★★★
Sonic Jam	Sega	11/97	Sonic 1, 2 and 3 on the Saturn.	★★★★
Sonic R	Sega	01/98	Funky racer featuring Sega's blue hedgehog.	★★★★
Street Super Surfers	Sega	01/98	Fun and exciting snowboarding for the Saturn.	★★★★
Street Fighter Alpha 2	Capcom	11/96	The latest version of Street Fighter is the best ever.	★★★★
Three Dirty Devils	Sega Soft	11/96	Difficult, but fun update to the classic puzzle/platformer.	★★★★
Tomb Raider	Sega	02/97	Apparently, URA really stands for Ugly, Repetitive, and Awful.	★★★★
Virtua Cop 2	Sega	01/97	Excellent console translation of arcade lightgun game.	★★★★
Virtua Fighter Kids	Sega	11/96	A fighting game with cute kiddie characters that packs punch.	★★★★
Virtua Fighter	Sega	01/97	Console conversion of arcade game. Giant robots duke it out...	★★★★
Virtual Open Tennis	Accaim	10/96	Tennis to play when it's raining.	★★★★
Winter Heat	Sega	04/98	Surprisingly good winter sports for your Saturn.	★★★★
World Series Baseball '98	EA Canada	09/97	The most detailed baseball game you can play!	★★★★
World Series Baseball	Sega	11/96	The best baseball game of '96	★★★★
WorldWide Soccer	Sega	12/96	The sports game of '96. Soccer fans have gotta love it!	★★★★

RESIDENT EVIL

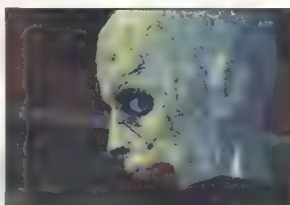
PUB. Capcom • DEV. Sony • PLAYERS. 1 • RATING. ★★★★★ • PRICE. \$49.99

So you and a team of crack-morons find yourselves trapped in a house that's swarming with zombies. Why? You don't need to know why, you just need to know that you're armed to the teeth and them zombies blow up real good. It's hard to categorize *Resident Evil*, since it's a combination of many things. It's an action game, it's an adventure and it's an RPG, all rolled into one big decaying, blood-spattered mess.

The addition of drastically cheesy dialogue and appalling voice-acting almost, but not quite, ruins the atmosphere. Sadly this problem was, if anything, exacerbated in the sequel. If you can ignore that though, *Resident Evil* is genuinely unsettling. *Resident Evil* is a genre-busting classic. Like the sign says, you gotta have this one!



PLAYSTATION RETRO REVIEW



Duke Sequel Switches Engines

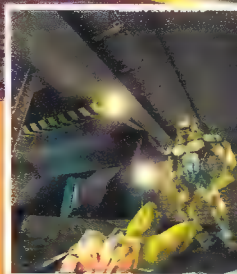
Usually, when you set out to make a new game, you start programming with one engine, and you usually stick with that engine until the end. But not 3D Realms. The company's impending blockbuster shooter, **Duke Nukem Forever**, was originally being built on id Software's **Quake II** engine, and development progressed along these lines from January until June, when suddenly the team had a change of heart.

'This was a tough decision for us,' said 3D Realms president George Broussard. 'It does not stem in any way from hard feelings, nor in fact, anything to do with id software. Our relationship still remains very good. This was a business decision and based on what we wanted to do with **Duke Nukem Forever** as a game.'

Broussard further explained that the **Unreal** engine was a better fit for their game design. He estimated that switching engines would only add four to six weeks to the game's development time. **Duke Nukem Forever** is expected in early to mid 1999. Broussard also addressed the two biggest concerns about the **Unreal** technology, namely its high system requirements and somewhat buggy Internet play.

'We are very confident that the Epic team will fix any and all outstanding issues with **Unreal** multiplayer over the Internet, and see it becoming one of the most popular games over the net,' said Broussard. 'As for machine specifications, **Duke Nukem Forever** is a 1999 game and we think that time frame matches very well with what we have planned for the game.'

While 3D Realms did not discuss specific financial arrangements, it did admit that it would have to eat the cost of the **Quake II** engine



PlayStation PDA Coming to US

One of the most innovative peripherals in the pipeline for the PlayStation in Japan has been their unique device code named PDA (Personal Digital Assistant.) At a press conference Sony announced that the device, which can plug into the PlayStation's memory port and features its own 32-bit RISC CPU and 32x32 black and white LCD screen, will be coming to the US in Spring '99.

One of the features that makes this idea possible is inclusion of an infrared port to communicate with remote PDA's. Add the small screen and 5 control buttons and makes aspects of PS gaming mobile.

Game ideas for the device vary; from sports leagues where each league member can put their team on the PDA and trade players with other members to the

possible downloading of RPG characters to train them Tamogotchi-style during the day, then use them when you go home. In addition to games, the PDA can also be used as a schedule/date keeper. More next month!

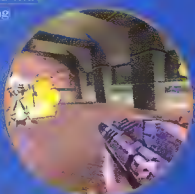
No Quake III?

The creators of some of the most popular PC games of all time, **Doom** and **Quake**, have filled us in on their plans for a successor to **Quake II**.

At first it was going to be a new game called **Trinity**, then plans changed to do another sequel, but shortly after E3 id Software decided to go the multi-player route with **Quake Arena**.

QA will be both a single player and multiplayer game, but the majority of the design emphasis will be on the multiplayer aspect. Instead of a one-player game with a series of levels, a storyline, and so forth, id will be simulating the deathmatch experience by pitting players against bots in deathmatch style arenas. Bots are enemies programmed with advanced AI routines, allowing them to duck, dodge, strafe, and roam the levels much like human opponents in a deathmatch.

Apart from this aspect, other details have yet to be worked out, and true to form, id didn't even venture to suggest a possible release date.



The Top 10

The Top 10

Best Selling N64 Titles

(Ranked on Units Sold March, 1998) • **Not in Top 10 Last Month • Source: NPD TRSTS Video Game Tracking Service

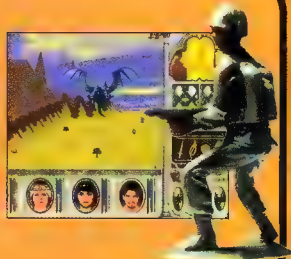


LAST MONTH	THIS MONTH	TITLE	PUBLISHER
	1	Super Mario 64	Nintendo
	2	Yoshi's Story	Nintendo
	3	Goldeneye 007	Nintendo
	4	Romance World Tour	Nintendo
	5	Super Mario 64	Nintendo
	6	Super Mario 64	Nintendo
	7	WCW vs. WWF: WW	Udon
	8	WWF vs. WWF: WW	Nintendo
	9	WWF vs. WWF: WW	Nintendo
	10	WWF vs. WWF: WW	Nintendo

The Top 10

Best Selling PC Titles

LAST MONTH	THIS MONTH	TITLE	PUBLISHER
	1	Wizardry 64	Wizardworks
	2	Wizardry 64	Wizardworks
	3	Wizardry 64	Wizardworks
	4	Wizardry 64	Wizardworks
	5	Wizardry 64	Wizardworks
	6	Wizardry 64	Wizardworks
	7	Wizardry 64	Wizardworks
	8	Wizardry 64	Wizardworks
	9	Wizardry 64	Wizardworks
	10	Wizardry 64	Wizardworks



Ranked on Units Sold March, 1998 • **Not in Top 10 Last Month
• Source: The NPD Group - Softrends

The Top 10

Best Selling PSX Titles

LAST MONTH	THIS MONTH	TITLE	PUBLISHER
	1	Tekken 3	Namco
	2	Tekken 3	Namco
	3	Tekken 3	Namco
	4	Tekken 3	Namco
	5	Tekken 3	Namco
	6	Tekken 3	Namco
	7	Tekken 3	Namco
	8	Tekken 3	Namco
	9	Tekken 3	Namco
	10	Tekken 3	Namco



Ranked on Units Sold March, 1998 • **Not in Top 10 Last Month
• Source: NPD TRSTS Video Game Tracking Service

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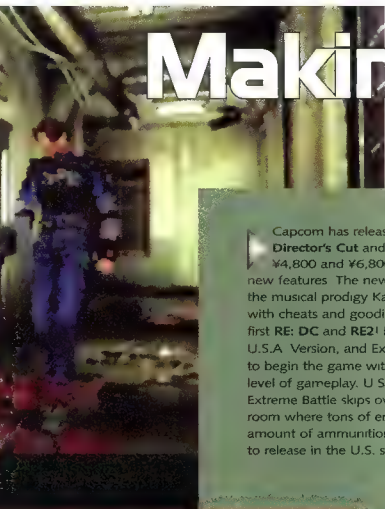
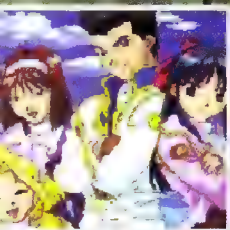
*Full details can be obtained at our web site at <http://www.winning.com> or by sending a SASE to: Thunder Force V Promotion, 18125 Chino Drive, Rindge, CA 95001. Complete details available in every game package.

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INCOMING ►►

Japan Journal

Making News in Japan



Capcom has released Dual Shock-compatible versions of **Resident Evil Director's Cut** and **Resident Evil 2**. These PlayStation titles retail for ¥4,800 and ¥6,800 (\$34 and \$49, respectively) and offer a variety of new features. The new **Resident Evil Director's Cut** features new music by the musical prodigy Kawachi Yoshimura, and a separate Complete Disc with cheats and goodies to save onto your Memory Card from both the first RE: DC and RE2! **Resident Evil 2** sports three new modes: Rookie, U.S.A. Version, and Extreme Battle Mode. Rookie enables your characters to begin the game with super-powerful weapons, and provides a similar level of gameplay. U.S.A. Version is what was released in the States. Extreme Battle skips over all of the in-game movies and puts you in a room where tons of enemies come at you, and you've got a limited amount of ammunition to blow them all away. Look for both of the games to release in the U.S. sometime in September at the price of \$39.95 for RE: DC and \$59.95 for RE2.

DOWNHILL SNOW

SYSTEM: PlayStation
PUBLISHER: Pack-In-Soft
RELEASED: 5/28/98
PRICE: ¥5,800 (\$41)



There's been a flood of snowboarding and skiing games recently, in part due to the popularity of the winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan. Although Konami had the right idea with **Hyper Olympic** in Nagano, Pack-In-Soft's **Downhill Snow** should do just that - pack it in.

The player chooses from seven characters, and can customize the characters' outfits by choosing his or her cap, sunglasses, jacket, gloves, pants, and boots. Sadly enough, this is the most entertaining part of the game.

There are four modes to choose from: Tournament, Practice, Scenario, and Vs. Mode. The goal of Tournament Mode is to win all 15 races. Vs. Mode has a split-screen, allowing you to play against a second player.

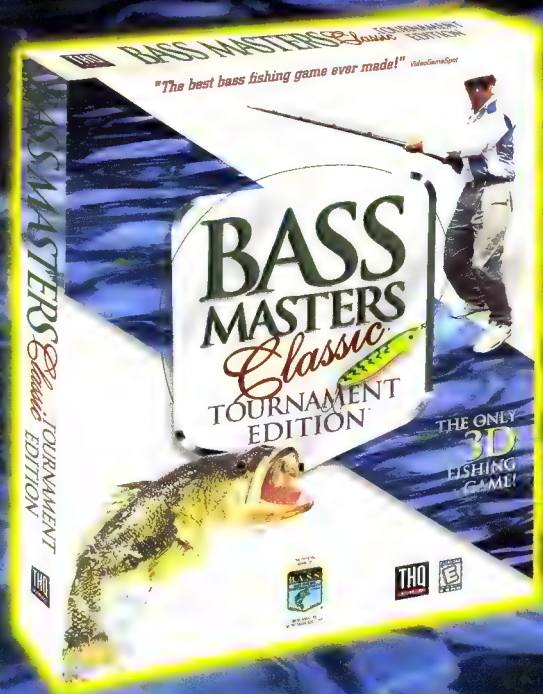
Ultimately, this game is unimpressive. While some skiing/snowboard games have realistic effects, this title is headed right for the sidelines. The controls make it difficult to maneuver, and there's no feeling of speed. The thrill of victory, the agony of **Downhill Snow**.

Despite the fact that **Virtua Striker 2** and **Lost World** were big hits, Sega's Japanese arcade business for this quarter has not revitalized the market. The fact that there is an economic recession in Japan hasn't been helpful either. On the consumer side, the Saturn's competition with the PlayStation and N64 has been fierce, and importance has been placed on software strategies. The Saturn in Japan has received a large amount of success due to the release of the wildly popular Japan-only series, **Sakura Taisen**. Outside of Japan the Saturn has continually had problems.

Sega Enterprises announced that composer Shigeaki Saigusa had declined a Director position at Sega. Saigusa was scheduled to begin June 26, joining lyricist Yasushi Akimoto, former Kadogawa Shoten president Tsunehiko Kadogawa, and former Bell System 24 president Masao Sonoyama as fellow directors in charge of business strategies for the Dreamcast. Saigusa cited overbooked overseas performances and his duty as a composer as the main reasons for not taking the position. Sega claims he has agreed to fill the role of an advisor in the future.

Warp recently held a press conference for **D2** at the Tokyo International Forum in Tokyo's Chiyoda district. President Kenji Iino emphasized that the combination of 'real field, real world, and real story' was the crux of the title. At press time, **D2** is the only official launch title known for the Dreamcast. It will retail for \$43 and is due out fourth quarter of 1998.

Serious Fishing...

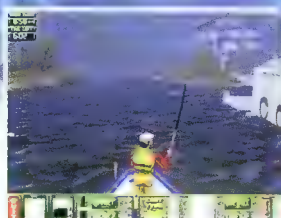
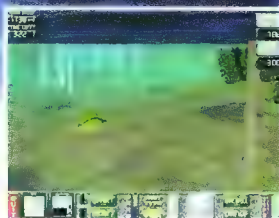


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GT24

SYSTEM: SATURN
PUBLISHER: Jaleco
RELEASED: May '98
PRICE: ¥5,800 (\$41)

Jaleco has only put out nine titles for the Saturn, including the *Game Heaven* series, *Tetris Plus*, and some Mah-jong games. Its tenth title, and first racing game, is *GT24*. On the Saturn, Sega's *Rally* and the *Daytona USA* series have punch, while Jaleco's cars race like Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

GT24 has one Beginner, two Intermediate, and three Expert level courses to choose from. The player can also select three Beginner and three Expert cars, each rated on their acceleration, maximum speed, and handling.

There are three modes of play: Grand Prix, 24 Hour, and Time Attack Mode. Grand Prix is like most racing games—try to get to the next checkpoint before time runs out. 24 Hour Mode allows you to choose a Pit Crew, refuel, and change drivers. Time Attack has you continually trying to beat your best time, with a ghost car to race against for added incentive.

The gameplay isn't anything great, with lots of

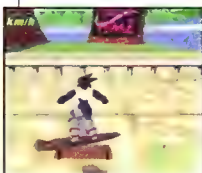
rough edges and impossible-to-manuever turns. Some elements, like night and day, have been added to give the game a little more variety. Also, your car can be damaged in 24 Hour Mode, which makes your pit crew even more invaluable.

This game sucks because no matter how fast you drive

your car, you cannot be in first place—even on Novice class! And how sad is it when the ghost car smokes you on Time Attack Mode? Another problem lies in the fact that if you are in front of someone on the track, your map shows that Jaleco are behind! Something says that Jaleco should stick to Mah-jong games.

AIR BOARDER 64

SYSTEM: NINTENDO
PUBLISHER: Human
RELEASED DATE: March '98
PRICE: ¥7,800 (\$56)



Human's first title for the N64, *F1 Pole Position*, was an extremely poor game. Its follow-up title, *Airboarder 64*, isn't much better.

There are three main modes to try in

One Player mode. In Street Work mode, you must reach certain checkpoints under a certain amount of time. Beat your best time in Time Attack mode, or practice your airboarding techniques in Free Run mode. If you have two players, there are two modes which enable you to go head to head against another player in a regular race, or in a coin-collecting match.

Compared to Sega's *Top Skater* arcade game and Nintendo's *1080 Snowboarding*, *Airboarder 64* falls flat on its ass. The collision detection has problems, the controls are too loose, graphics are ugly and spotty, and the music, frankly, sucks.

Corrections
(i.e. We Screwed up)

In last month's Japan Journal, it was stated that *Bombberman Hero* was published by Sony Music Entertainment for the PlayStation when in fact the game is published by Hudson Soft for the N64. *Gun Griffon II* is not published by Sony ME for the PlayStation, either, but for the Saturn by Game Arts. We apologize for any confusion. We repent by slapping ourselves on the collective head with a hearty 'D'oh!'

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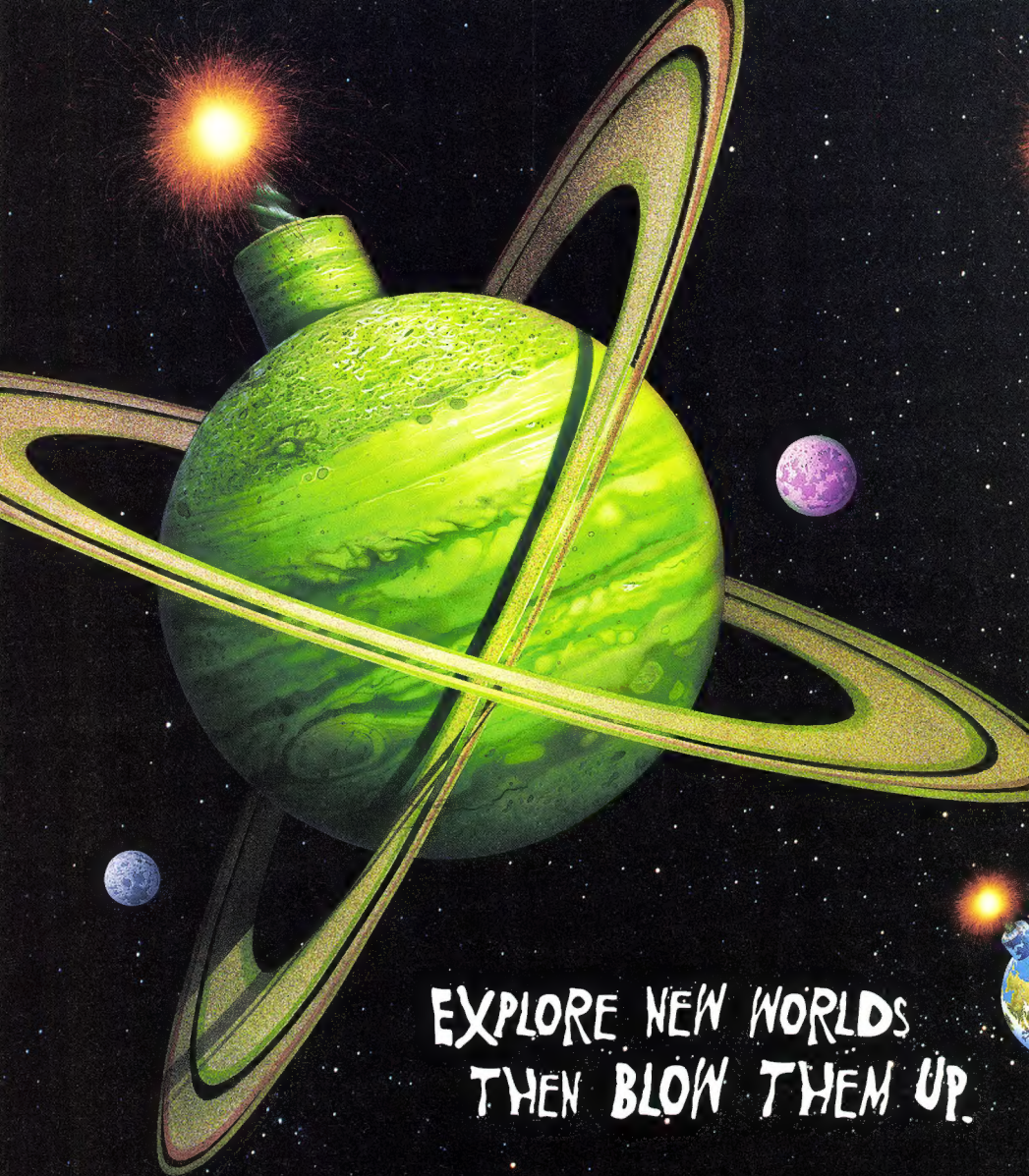


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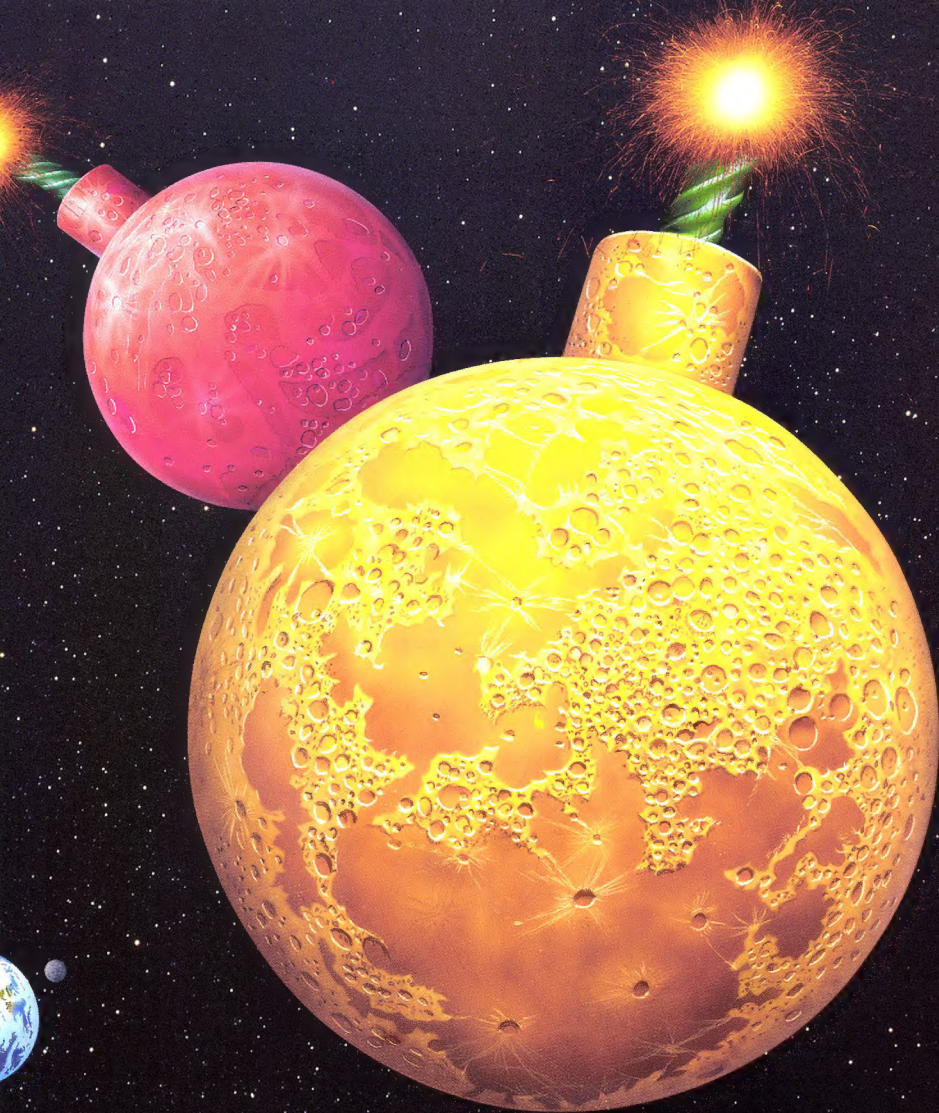
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